Down and Up Again

Allegories of Becoming and Transcendence

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To

Ilse

my dear wife

and

Jeanette, Kaiser, Mariana, Vera

students and friends

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Introduction

Beginnings and endings are notions that have fascinated thinkers and believers of all persuasions ever since the ability to think (whatever this provocative verb may mean or what it no longer means) emerged in complicity with the ability to image that which presents itself in sensuous and sensual qualities carrying with them specific meanings that are as much intentions as values.

Although these notions of beginnings and endings seem to emphasize time they are fallacious to a degree because they overlook or divert attention from the person who propounds them and because they do not take into account time's implicate, space. And yet in the hallowed and hackneyed phrase "in the beginning" this spatial element is already incontrovertibly indicated by the preposition "in." As we might say nowadays, this slanted view of a beginning has spawned two speculative themes: cosmogony and cosmology.

The term cosmogony derives from the Greek words *kosmos* meaning "order" and *gignesthai* meaning "to become." In the current sense of "origin of the world" or, more grandiloquently, "universe," the word cosmogony applies as much to the speculative accounts of modern astronomers as it does to the mythical accounts of ancient people. The common bond between the ancients and the moderns is their reductionism of what they claim to be the universe or reality to some alledgedly basic "stuff," referred to as "matter."[1]

The term cosmology also derives from the Greek words *kosmos* and *logos* meaning "account," "relation," "ratio," "reason(ing)," "discourse," "argument," as well as, in its relation to *legein*, "to choose," "to collect," "to gather." The philosophical use of this term was initiated by Christian Wolff (1679-1754) who defined cosmology as the science of the world or the universe in general, as distinct from ontology, theology, and psychology. His importance for subsequent intellectual trends is his clarification of terms already in use and his introduction of new terms such as "monism" as well as "teleology" and his application of the term "dualism" to the presumed

[1] The emphasis on this basic stuff as being matter goes back to Aristotle's (384-322 BCE) notion of *hylē* which he understood as meaning "that out of which something has been made" as well as "that which has form."

mind-matter problem (still rampant in certain circles) reflecting his own spiritual-material reductionism.

With the decline of speculative philosophy and the growing realization of the fact that there is more to what is called mind/mentality than mere ratiocination and with the shift from a static structure-oriented worldview to a dynamic process-oriented one, cosmologists have tended to be scientists: astronomers, theoretical physicists, and mathematicians. In their speculations about the beginning(s) of what they believe to be the world or the universe, they still continue leaving out the primal source from which their matter-based speculations have, to use a Neoplatonic expression, "emanated."[2] It is within this relatively new process-oriented perspective that emphasis is placed on the self-organization of whole systems with the result that what had been, at best, an epiphenomenon, now is realized to be of primary importance. But first, the phrase "self-organization of whole systems" needs some clarification. By "whole systems" we mean any living organism such as ourselves, consisting, as the saying goes, of organic and inorganic "matter." By "self-organization" we mean a heuristic formula that does not pretend to solve any problem unless we can describe (or, as

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2 Strictly speaking, by "emanation(s)" Plotinus (204-270 CE) understood a series of levels: (a) "the One" being a principle superior to intellect and being (Plato's *nous*), totally unitary and simple, (b) "Intelligence" operating in a state of non-temporal simultaneity, holding within itself the "forms" of all things (Aristotle's *hylē),* (c) "Soul" generating time and receiving intelligence's forms into itself as "reason principles" (*logoi*). Each "higher" level was supposed to "flow out" (emanate) and radiate into the "lower" one. Our physical three-dimensional world is the outcome of the lower aspect of Soul projecting itself on a kind of negative field of force, called "matter." Following Plato (427-347 BCE), he speaks of matter as "evil" (*Enneads*, II.8) and of the Soul as a "fall" (*Enneads*, V.1.1), though he sees the whole cosmic process as the result of the superabundant productivity of the One and our world as "the best of all possible worlds" — an idea that was to figure prominently in Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz's (1646-1716) philosophical theology that was satirized by Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet, 1694-1778) in one of his masterworks, *Candide*.

Plotinus' assessment of matter as evil reflects Plato's verdict on the pre-Socratic thinkers' conception of the *apeiron* meaning "the boundless" or "the unlimited". The first thinker to introduce this term was Anaximander (ca. 612-545 BCE). However, it is not quite certain whether he understood by it the spatially unbounded or the temporally unbounded or the qualitatively indeterminate. Subseqent thinkers tried to pin it down to one or another concrete "substance" such as air and earth. Plato's lasting contribution was, apart from his decrying the *apeiron* as evil and arbitrarily decreeing it to be feminine, his extolling the limited and limiting (*peras*), the Logos, as being masculine and good. He thus has the dubious fame of being the progenitor and perpetrator of misogyny (pervasive of all theistic religions) in addition to his having written his notorious *Republic*, the blueprint of all the political and racial and biogenetic excesses of modern totalitarian régimes.

some might prefer, explain) *how* and *why* any living organism organizes itself the way it does. We know (or seem to know) that organic matter has and displays the ability to organize itself and we have come to admit that even inorganic matter has this same ability as witnessed in a vortex, a tornado, a flame, all of them being organized structures that come and have come into being spontaneously (from Latin *sponte* "of its own accord"). The inevitable conclusion seems to be that such notions as organic and inorganic are largely academic and that wholeness evinces that kind of organization that we call "life" that, in turn, is, for want of an as yet better term, "intelligent" through and through.[3] "Intelligence," not to be confused with "intellect," is self-organization dynamics, and as Mind or Spirit — (terms carried over from a static worldview) — expresses itself in the multifaceted processes in which a living system organizes and renews itself. Its basic themes are stated by the late Erich Jantsch (1929-1980) to be as follows:[4]

> … by notions such as self-determination, self-organization and self-renewal; by the recognition of a systemic interconnectedess over space and time of all natural dynamics; by the logical supremacy of processes over spatial structures; by the role of fluctuations which render the law of large numbers invalid and give a chance to the individual and its creative imagination; by the openness and creativity of an evolution which is neither in its emerging and decaying structures, nor in the end result, predetermined.

These themes have far-reaching implications as they directly bear on the question of *how* it happens that we as thinking beings not only find ourselves in situations that are far from satisfying, but also struggle to get out of them. For many people these themes and their implications are unpalatable because they obviate their cherished assumption that there is some

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[3] This seemingly modern idea has a fairly long history. As hylozoism (from Greek *hylē* meaning "matter," and *zōē* meaning "life") it was introduced polemically by Ralph Cudworth (1617-88), one of the group of the so-called Cambridge Platonists whose concern was ultimately religious and theological rather than philosophical. He was instrumental in defining a position that contrasted with the soul-body dualism as propounded by Pythagoras (570?-495? BCE), Plato, and René Descartes (1596-1650), with the reductive materialism of Democritus (ca. 460-ca. 370 BCE) and Thomas Hobbes (1598-1679), and with Aristotle's hylomorphism. As was to be expected, this doctrine was attacked by theistic philosophers as being atheistic. Their attack reflected their fundamental reductionism that was unable to distinguish between atheism and non-theism (as is even today the case with many theologians, the exorcist Pope John Paul II included).

[4] *The Self-organizing Universe – Scientific and Human Implications in the Emerging Paradigm of Evolution,* p. 8.

agent (human or divine/satanic[5]) whom they can blame for their predicament, and because they invalidate their equally cherished assumption that there is some agent (equally human or divine/satanic) who will do what they themselves have to do. In any case, these themes and their thought-through implications expose the fictitious character of what is called "free will." While it is us who create our gods and devils and surround them with the nimbus of being something (some *thing*), so it is us who create the belief that we have free will that has nothing to do with choice — which sane person would willingly choose frustration, unhappiness, pain and so on? Rather, it is a particular quale that makes us feel as if we had something called free will. As Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen succinctly state:[6]

> … free will is not 'just' an illusion: it is a *figment rendered real* by the evolutionary complicity of mind and culture.

Inasmuch as, unlike those belonging to the Western traditions, the rDzogs-chen thinkers, like all other Buddhists, did not share the belief in a Supreme Being (whatever that may mean) as the source of the cosmos and of us living in it, there is neither someone whom we can blame when things do not turn out the way we would like them to, nor is there someone of whom we can expect to do things for us. However, since only too often things do not turn out the way we would like them to, we feel pretty frustrated and, at times, even utterly lost. Hence, the questions of *how* did we get ourselves into this mess in which we find ourselves and of *what* can we do to extricate ourselves out of it are of paramount importance. But so much is certain, no amount of ratiocination can provide an answer. One's rational faculty in the sense of one's critical acumen may help us in dealing with the *what*, but it is utterly inadequate and helpless when it comes to the *how*. In other words, I can deal with the *what* without actually getting involved in it and, in this aloofness, convey its significance or irrelevance to others, but the *how* involves my whole being and to convey this, say, "*how* does and did it feel to get into the present mess," needs some other way of

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[5] This dualism between God and Satan (a Hebrew word meaning "adversary") was unknown to early Hebrew thinking; it first made its way into Hebrew literature after the exile. As the opponent of God, Satan became a prominent figure in the Christian New Testament writings. For details see Peter Stanford, *The Devil – A Biography*. Mankind's fascination with the Devil is lucidly explored by Gerald Messadié in his *The History of the Devil*. A deeply probing study of the Devil in art is Luther Link's *The Devil – The Archfiend in Art From the Sixth to the Sixteenth Century.*

[6] *Figments of Reality*, p. 241.

thinking and even a different kind of languaging that may well spill over into the "*what* can I do." This different kind of languaging involves the use of symbols, images through which the whole's dynamic expresses itself and which we, by virtue of our being both the whole and yet only part of it, impressed by them, weave into allegorical narratives.[7]

The key phrases to introduce these narratives about the *how* are *'khrul-tshul* "the mode of one's going astray" (or "errancy" for short) and *'khrul-pa ldog-tshul* "the mode of reversing the trend to go astray." Because of its prevailing trend let us begin with "errancy" (*'khrul-pa*).

Errancy — The Trend to go astray

Only too often, as enworlded beings we humans are overwhelmed by the disturbing and uncomfortable feeling that some time and some place we went astray, got lost, and now, quite literally, are stuck in the mud or, worse, feel as if we were in prison. Whilst being in this dismal situation, two other kinds of feeling are stirring in us, the one prompts us to look back and find the "beginning" of our *misère* that, again, is felt to have begun contextually and tempts us to blame others for our shortcomings; the other makes us look ahead and prompts us to find the means to get out of the present impasse by reversing the fateful trend to go astray. But this is not possible unless we *know* the "beginning" that, from the perspective of our enworldedness and relatively closed situatedness, seems to be less of the nature of an isolated event in the past and more of the nature of an aspect of the generative cosmic order of which we, as its experiencers, are, for this very reason, its participants. Participation necessitates a reassessment of what we ordinarily understand by *knowing* — the dichotomic-fragmentizing-thingifying-representational thinking mode of the detached unfeeling

[7] The longest such allegorical narrative is the *Thig-le gsang-ba'i brda' rgyud* by Vimalamitra, a contemporary of Padmasambhava (8th century CE). Its two versions in the sDe-dge edition, 25: fols. 49b-53b, and the Thimphu edition, vol. 5, pp. 482-492, respectively, abound in misspellings and apparent incomprehensions of the block-carvers and/or scribes. Of the two other narratives, the one by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa Dri-med-'od-zer (1308-64) forms the tenth chapter of his *Theg-mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod* (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*), fols. 162a-169b, and is a compilation of various post-Padmasambhava accounts whose symbol terms he has meticulously explicated. The other version, similar in character, is by rGod-kyi ldem-'phru-can (also known as dNgos-grub rgyal-mtshan) (1327-86). It is found in this author's collection of contemplative and ritual texts, the *dGongs-pa zang-thal*), in vol. 2, columns 603-631.

observer. On the part of us as ubiquitous experiencers, participation involves a deeply felt understanding, an *inner*standing as well as an intuitive ("seeing from within") awareness of the primordial contextuality. Whether primordial (*anfänglich*) or final (*endmässig*), contextuality involves, in the narrower sense of the word as an interpersonal dimensionality, at least two facets. The one is the participant himself, who because of his being a closure of the whole onto itself is therefore an emergent phenomenon and as such already a second beginning; the other is the equally emergent participant with whom the first participant communes and communicates what he experiences. Communication on this level reverberates with its source, the immediacy of experience, expressing itself through mythopoetic languaging with its rich repertoire of symbols and gestures (*brda'*). And in this communicating, contextuality reveals itself as an aspect of a larger dimensionality, a complexity in which numbers, specifically, 3, 5, 8, 21, play prominent roles.

For the experience-based and process-oriented rDzogs-chen thinkers, man's trend to go astray as well as his reversal of this trend was a theme of paramount importance and concern, and the manner in which they introduced their narrative accounts of it, varied from author to author as may gleaned from the preambles to these narratives.

The earliest presentations are those by Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra, the one a "foreigner" hailing from Urgyan, a vast, but vaguely defined and definable, region covering the Middle Near East, the Iranian plateau extending into Turkestan and Central Asia, the other an Indian hailing from some place in the Western part of what the Tibetans understood by India (*rgya-gar*).

Padmasambhava's preamble to his dissertation reflects his deeply felt understanding of what we nowadays for the most part have forgotten and condescendingly and sometimes nostalgically tend to call a past age's mysticism of light (*Lichtmystik*). Out of this understanding he presents what is best described as "the complexity of the initial situation" that antedates any concrete situation. His words are:[8]

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[8] *lTa-ba la-shan chen-po rin-chen sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 1: 109a:

'di-skad bdag-gis rtogs-pa'i dus-gcig-na
ma-byung ma-skyes mnyam-pa-chen-po
chos-dbyings rgya-chad phyogs-lhung-med-pa
rang-bzhin-gyi ming-las'das-pa'i ***gnas****-na*

Once when I understood (Being's) calling,[9]

In a **locale** that was [as yet] unoriginated, unborn, an utter (self-) sameness,

A dimension of meanings (stored and/or in *statu nascendi*), unlimited and impartial,

Beyond (any) name (denoting) its very eigenbeing,

Its core intensity, self-originated, beyond the intellect's scope, the **teacher/revealer** "Supreme Lord of mysteries"

Had surrounded its very eigenbeing with a triple **audience** and

At a **time** separate from its divisions into a beginning, an interim, and an end,

Initiated this **teaching** that, not having a name and being divested of [dogmatic] limitations,

Revealed all lighting-up modes as being beyond the intellect's scope.

Two ideas in this scenario in which the number five plays a significant role, deserve special attention because they highlight the basically dynamic character of this "initial situation" of which the experiencer/narrator is about to speak. The one is Being's "utter (self-)sameness" qualified as a dimension of meanings; the other is the "triple audience." The qualification of Being's utter (self-)sameness as a dimension of meanings indirectly points to what is otherwise, for descriptive purposes, spoken of by Padmasambhava as Being, the ground and reason (for there being anything) (*gzhi*), and this ground's lighting-up (*snang-ba, gzhi-snang*) that, in so doing, closes-in onto itself and narrows itself into its very eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*). In restating what is so evocatively described by Padmasambhava in modern diction, the mathematical concepts of "symmetry" as bland uniformity and "symmetry-breaking" as the generation of patterns come in very handy. As we are told and shall see, this symmetry-breaking occurs

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snying-po rang-byung blo-las'das-pa'i ***ston-pa*** *gsang-bdag-chen-po-la*
*rang-gi rang-bzhin-gi '****khor*** *rnam-pa gsum gyis bskyor-nas*
thog-bar-tha gsum-gyi phyogs-ris dang bral-ba'i ***dus****-su*
snang-tshul thams-cad blo-'das-su ston-pa
ming-med mtha'-grol-gyi ***bstan-pa*** *'di bkod-do*

[9] The Tibetan word '*di-skad*, literally meaning "like this," "saying so," is the Tibetan translators' rendering of the Sanskrit word *evaṁ* that the Indians interpreted as being a code, in which *e* as the locative of *a* (the first letter of the alphabet and the first utterance of a living being) means the locale, conceived of as feminine and expressing an individual's critical-appreciative acumen (*prajñā*); in which the *va*, conceived of as masculine and expressing an individual's expertise (*upāya*), is located; and in which the *ṁ* is conceived of as the force that holds the masculine and feminine together.

quite spontaneously through a disturbance in the bland uniformity which for this reason is not something static, but something on the brink of breaking up. However, since Being or the ground and reason for being/beings is nowhere else than in its lighting-up as being/beings, we can paradoxically, though justifiably, claim ourselves to be Being (the whole) and only a luminous part (aspect) of it. Furthermore, inasmuch as the teacher/revealer is said to be Being's core intensity and as such can be said to be Being-as-locale's (auto-)excitation, he is more of the nature of a process involving three phases that constitute a uni-trinity.[10] Since we cannot reasonably think of a teacher independent of his audience, it follows that, from a dynamic perspective, he surrounds himself with an entourage with whom he interacts. It is in connection with this idea of an audience or entourage as a lighting-up and symmetry-breaking event that the number three begins to play a prominent role. Thus Padmasambhava tells us:[11]

> The assembly of audiences also is as follows:
>
> An audience that is the lighting-up of (Being's) inner dynamic, resembling an incentive to develop epistemology-oriented thought systems,[12]
>
> An audience that comes to the fore by its (own) force (that as such) is (Being's) inconceivable supraconscious ecstatic intensity,
>
> An audience that lies beyond the scope of (ordinary) thought processes (constituted by) egocentricity, its ontic background, and the crowd of divisive concepts.
>
> These three (audiences) are the audience-(*qua*-audience) of Being (in its transformation into its) eigenbeing.

It is the lighting-up of (Being's) innner dynamic in a multiplicity of patterns specified as audiences that has attracted the attention of the ubiquitous

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[10] For details of this uni-trinity and its relationship to Gnostic ideas with which Padmasambhava was familiar, see Herbert Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*, p. 33 n. 82.

[11] *Rin-po-che yang-snying thog-ma'i dras-thag gcod-pa spros-pa gcod-pa'i rgyud*, 2: 266a:

'khor-tshogs kyang 'di-lta ste
rtsal-snang mtshan-nyid lta-bu'i' khor dang
shugs-'byung rig-pa bsam-gyis mi-khyab-pa'I' khor dang
yid sems rtog-tshogs bsam-'das-kyi 'khor te
de gsum ni rang-bzhin gzhi'I 'khor-ro

[12] Unlike the Sanskrit language that has only one word, *lakṣaṇa*, the Tibetan language distinguishes between *mtshan-ma* and *mtshan-nyid*, the latter meaning "that which makes *mtshan-ma*(*s*) to be *mtshan-ma*(*s*)." In its extended use it refers to epistemology-oriented thought systems of which the process-oriented rDzogs-chen thinkers took a dim view because of the static character of these systems.

experiencer. Again it is Padmasambhava who informs us about this multiplicity in terms of the number three. His words are:[13]

> The audience that is the rays of light of (Being's) inner dynamic as well as the (experiencer's) cognitive capacities also is as follows:
> The ceaselessly (radiating) rays of light of (Being's) inner dynamic is the audience (constituted as) a (virtual) light and its emergence (as an actual light),
> (The experiencer's) cognitive capacities are the audience (constituted as the experiender's) intellect (operating as) egocentricity, its ontic background, and its organismic bifurcational thinking,[14] (and as)
>
> The eigenbeing's audience it also is as follows:
> An audience that is the eigenbeing's thereness,
> An audience that is the eigenbeing's vision [of itself], and
> An audience that is the eigenbeing's understanding [of itself].
>
> Furthermore, the audience (as its) ultimate maturation is as follows:
> The *byang-chub-sems-dpa'* as the causal momentum (in the maturation process),

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[13] *gTer-snying rin-po-che spungs-pa'i rgyud*, 2: 316a:

rtsal-zer shes-rig-gi 'khor yang 'di-lta ste
ma-'gags rtsal-zer 'od dang 'gyu-ba'I 'khor dang
shes-rig yid sems dran-rtog blo-yi 'khor dang

rang-bzhin-gyi 'khor yang 'di-lta ste
rang-bzhin gnas-pa'i 'khor dang
rang-bzhin lta-ba'i'khor dang
rang-bzhin rtogs-pa'i'khor dang

gzhan yang smin-pa chen-po'i 'khor yang 'di-lta ste
rgyu'i byang-chub-sems-dpa' dang
lam-gyi byang-chub-sems-dpa' dang
'bras-bu'i byang-chub-sems-dpa'o

[14] rDzogs-chen thinkers distinguish between *dran-rig* and *dran-rtog*. In compounds in which *rig-*(*pa*) occurs, as for instance, in *shes-rig* in line one and three of the above stanza, and in *ma-rig-pa* "not quite the cognitive intensity that a sentient and, hence, cognitive being might be capable of developing," *rig-pa* denotes the "excitable" quality of what is usually referred to as mind. By contrast, *rtog-*(*pa*) denotes the bifurcational activity of consciousness in establishing our customary subject-object dichotomy. In the present context, the term *dran-*(*pa*), rendered as "memory" in the still current so-called translations that ignore the fact that this technical term, as used by the Buddhists, means "to keep the object of one's contemplation as steady as possible before one's mind," connotates what in biology is termed "ontogenetic metabolic memory." In the above rendering, I have borrowed the term "organismic" from the section "Mind as a dynamic principle" in Erich Jantsch, *The Self-Organizing Universe*, p. 163.

The *byang-chub-sems-dpa'* as the (going one's) way (in the maturation process), (and)
The *byang-chub-sems-dpa'* as the climax (in the maturation process).

With this emphasis on the *byang-chub-sems-dpa'*, "the individual who has the courage to direct his mind on his ultimate reality that is his existential self-refinement and consummate perspicacity," attention has shifted from Being's "cosmic" dimension to its "anthropic" one, without, however, falling into the trap of an experientially untenable rigid dualism. As is to be expected with such a process-oriented thinker as Padmasambhava, this anthropic dimension is itself a triune process such that the evolving, maturing audience becomes the "Man of Light" (*Lichtmensch*) attending his teacher/revealer who himself is Light in its very dynamic. Almost by way of summing up what he has said before or always insisted upon, Padmasambhava declares:[15]

The audience (as its) ultimate maturation also is as follows:
An audience that (by its) own inner dynamic is light radiating,[16]
An audience that (by its) own luminescence is symbolic expressiveness,
An audience that (by its) own luminescence is radiance by itself, (and as such is)
An audience that is the inseparability of self-originating and self-collapsing.

And furthermore,
An audience that (in being/becoming) the lighting-up of its inner dynamic is rays of light (spreading),

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[15] *bDud-rtsi bcud—bsdus sgron-ma brtsegs-pa'i rgyud*, 2: 323a:

smin-pa chen-po'I 'khor yang 'di-lta ste
rang-rtsal'od-gsal-gyi 'khor dang
rang-dangs rnam-dag-gi 'khor dang
rang-dangs rang-gsal-gyi 'khor dang
rang-byung rang-brlag dbyer-med-pa'i 'khor-ro

gzhan yang
rtsal-snang zer-gyi 'khor dang
'od-gsal kun-khyab-kyi 'khor dang
yang-lag bu'i 'khor dang
mtshan-nyid rig-pa'i'khor dang
'gyu-ba yid-kyi 'khor dang
rang-sangs rnam-dag rang-bzhin rtogs-pa'i 'khor-ro

[16] This rendering of '*od-gsal* attempts to convey its Tibetan hermeneutical interpretation: a (virtual) light ('*od*) becoming an (actual) radiating light (*gsal*).

An audience that (in being/becoming) light radiating is all-encompassing/all-pervasive,
An audience that (in being/becoming) "feelers"[17] is a child (running away from home),
An audience that (in being/becoming) epistemology-oriented thought systems is (the whole's) supraconscious ecstatic intensity,
An audience that (in being/becoming) a stirring (emergent) phenomenon is (the individual's) egocentric mentation,
An audience that (by virtue of its mental/spiritual darkness) having dissipated (and its intrinsic luminosity shining in) symbolic expressiveness is the (deeply felt) understanding of its eigenbeing (by way of its eigenbeing).

Now a really important problem emerges. So far we have singled out two features in the complexity of the initial situation, referred to in human-social terms as teacher/revealer (*ston-pa*) and audience/entourage (*'khor*). Each seems to be a simplicity that, on closer inspection, has turned out to be a complexity of phase spaces following a preferred direction (be this teacher/revealer and/or audience/entourage). But the most intriguing feature of the teacher/revealer and the audience/entourage as dynamic principles are their characterizations as "beyond the intellect's scope" (*blo-'das*) and "auto-luminescent" (*rang-dangs*) and or "radiating in their own light" (*rang-gsal*). This leads to the idea of their identity from the implied idea of wholeness that defies any reductionist tendencies. Accordingly we are told:[18]

[17] The literal meaning of the Tibetan term *yan-lag* is a limb and in the concrete human being it means his hands by means of which he "feels himself into his environment" and explores it. The image of a child is a favorite one with Padmasambhava and intimates the child's running away from its mother and eventually returning to her.

[18] *Sangs-rgyas kun-gyi dgongs-pa'i bcud bsdus ri-bo brtsegs-pa'i rgyud,* 3: 1-2a:

> *'di-skad bdag-gis rtogs-shing bshad-pa'i dus-gcig-na / gnas de-na ye-thog-ma'i sangs-rgyas / ka-dag dngos-med zang-ka mi-snang gsal-ba'i rang-bzhin-du bshugs-so // ston-pa de-nyid-las mi-gzhan rang-byung rang-dangs-kyi 'khor-la / chos-kyi dbyings-kyi bstan-pa / ye-med mtshon-med blo-'das tha-snyad ming-las'das-pa'i theg-pa / ngag-tu mi gsung bying-gyis brlabs-kyis gsungs-so*

No author or editor of this work is mentioned in the colophon. To judge by the vocabulary it originated within the circles around Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra. The phrase *nyid-las mi-gzhan,* without the explicit mention of the teacher/revealer, occurs in Padmasambhava's *sPros-bral don-gsal,* 1: 62a:

> *'khor-tshogs nyid-las mi-gzhan-no*
>
> The audiences are not different from the teacher/revealer.

> Once when I had understood and spoke of Being's calling, (it so happened that) in the locale (that was Being's wholeness) the primeval (and) primordial *erlichtet* one resided in his eigenbeing (that was Being's) symbolic pregnance, insubstantial, dissipative, radiant whilst not lighting up. He conveyed to his audience that was not different from him, self-originated and auto-luminescent, his teaching that was the dimension of meanings (stored and/or in *statu nascenci*), a spiritual career that was (a) primordial No, undemonstrable, beyond the intellect's scope, and beyond the scope of the words of (one's) common language, not by way of words, but by his enthusiastically inspiriting power.

It is from out of this complex/simplex audience that the *rang-gsal sems-dpa'-rdo-rje*, "(Being's, the whole's) indestructibility as (its) valiant mind that radiates in its own light,"[19] comes to the fore and asks the teacher/revealer "Lord of (Being's) mystery who in his ultimacy is beyond the intellect's scope" (*blo-'das gsang-bdag chen-po*), first about what is meant by Dasein (*gnas-lugs*) and then about what is meant by going astray (*'khrul-pa*) and how it runs its course. In the answer to the first question a number of relevant terms occur, for which reason it may be given in full:[20]

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[19] On the basis of the available and as yet unexplored rDzogs-chen literature it is safe to assume that Padmasambhava is the only author who distinguishes between *sems-dpa'-rdo-rje*, expressly stated to be *rang-gsal*, and *rdo-rje-sems-dpa'* (Skt. *vajrasattva*) with no qualifications.

[20] *lTa-ba la-shan chen-po rin-chen sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 1: 109ab:

> *ma-byung ma-skyes thog-ma'i sngon-rol-na*
> *sems-nyid gting-yangs don-gyi gnas-lugs ni*
> *ming-med shes-med rtog-med kun-'byung mdzod*
> *mtha'-stongs snying-po don-gyi rang-bzhin-la*
> *ma-rig ye-shes 'khrul dang ma-'khrul med*
> *stong-las kun-'byung 'khrul-rtog sna-tshogs dang*
> *byung-sar rang-grol rang-snang ye-shes yin*
> *snying-po gzhi-yi ngang-du dbye-bsal med*
> *ngo-bo kun-bral thog-mtha' dge-sdig dang*
> *mtha'-dbus phyogs-ris blang-dor ming yang med*
> *ji-bzhin cang-med dbyings-las ma-g.yos kyang*
> *'on-kyang rang-bzhin ji-ltar gsal-bar snang*
> *chos-kun rtsa-ba dngos-med byang-chub-sems*
> *med-las mi-zad 'byung-ba'i mchod-rten-po*
> *rang-bzhin ye-nas ma-bcos gting-mtha'-yas*
> *ngo-bo cir yang ma-yin blo-las-'das*
> *mtshan-nyid tha-dad bsam-yas cir yang snang*
> *gnas-lugs gting-yangs don-gyi ngo-bo-la*
> *chos-can chos-nyid mi-phyed mnyam-pa-nyid*
> *bden-rdzun 'khrul-pa rang-grol zhe-'dod med*
> *gsal-dag zang-thal rin-chen sgron-ma 'di*

Before (any) beginning had originated (and) been born,

Reality's Dasein, thinking's thinking (*sems-nyid*), profound and vast, (was such that)

It had no name, no cognitiveness, no conceptuality, (and yet) was the thesaurus of (what was to become the) phenomenal world.

In (this) reality's eigenbeing, a core intensity (*snying-po*) that was devoid of (any) limitations,

There was nothing that could be called low-level excitation (*ma-rig-pa*) or originary awareness mode(s) (*ye-shes*), errancy (*'khrul*) or non-errancy (*ma-'khrul*).

It was the multiplicity of mistaken notions, the phenomenal world (that had emerged) out of its nothingness and

An awareness (that) was lighting up by itself (in view of the fact that the phenomenal world) had dissolved by itself in the locale in which it had originated,

In the dimension of this ground and reason (for all that is), (Being's) core intensity, there was nothing to separate and to eliminate.

With respect to its nothingness-openness-"stuff" (*ngo-bo*) that stood completely apart from everything, there were no words to refer to (*ming-med*) a beginning or end, good and evil,

Periphery and center, sections and biases, acceptance and rejection.

Though not having moved from (its) dimensionality of just-so-ness and not-anything-whatsoever-ness,

Its eigenbeing was lighting up brilliantly in its just-so-ness (as)

The root of all that is, the insubstantial *byang-chub-sems*,

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ngo-bo cir yang ma-grub nam-mkha' bzhin
rgyu-las ma-byung nam-yang skye mi-'gyur
sangs-rgyas sems-can dbyer-med ngo-bo gcig
gcig-po bstan-du med-pa'i snying-po nyid
snang-stong rtag dang chad-pa'i mtha'-las grol
spang-bya gnyen-po blang-dor dmigs-'dzin bral
rigs-drug sems-can 'khrul-pa'i rtog-pa dang
dus-gsum rgyal-ba'i ye-shes dgongs-pa gnyis
snying-po ming-med don-gyi ngo-bor mnyam
mnyam dang mi-mnyam nyid kyang mtshon-brjod-med
mtshon-brjod yod-med nyid kyang gting-mtha' grol
ma-byung ma-skyes rang-bzhin bar-do na
sems-nyid ngo-bo mkha' dang 'ja' ltar gnas
ji-bzhin ma-slad snying-po kun-gyi gzhi
ma-phyed mi-phyed 'gro-'ong med-pa'i gnas
shes-'gyu myong-rig med-pa'i dngos-gzhi-can
ma-byung ma-btsal dmigs-med dngos-po med
byar-med chags-pa med-pa bde-ba'i ngang
'gyur-med rang-gnas klong-yangs tshig-las 'das

Out of (whose) No (*med*) a *mchod-rten* [21] of inexhaustible elemental forces (arose).

Its eigenbeing (*rang-bzhin*), uncontrived (and unimprovable) since its beginningless beginning, is profound and endless,

Its openness-nothingness-"stuff" (*ngo-bo*) that is no-thing-whatsoever (lies) beyond the intellect's scope,

Its diverse epistemology-orientations (*mtshan-nyid*) light up as inconceivably (many) thought systems.[22]

Its Dasein (or thereness, *gnas-lugs*), so profound and vast, reality's openness-nothingness-"stuff,"

There is no separation between its creativity (*chos-nyid*) and its representational creations (*chos-can*), [and this is what is meant by its] utter (self-)sameness

With no passionate interests in truth or falsehood, errancy or auto-dissipation.

This precious lamp, being of symbolic significance in its radiance,

Is like the sky whose openness-nothingness-"stuff" is not some thing.

Not having originated from (some) causal momentum, it will never be born (as some thing).

This one "stuff" in which the statuses of one who is *erlichtet* and one who is an ordinary sentient being are inseparable,

Is (Being's) core intensity (*snying-po*) that cannot be demonstrated as a One

Divested (*grol*) of the limit situations of (Being's) lighting-up as the phenomenal and its voiding (itself of it) with their eternalistic and nihilistic claims, (and standing)

Apart (*bral*)[23] from referential claims about what has to be renounced and what aids its renouncing, about acceptance and rejection,

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[21] Architecturally speaking, this term, in its English spelling Chorten, corresponds to the Sanskrit words *caitya* and *stūpa*. The Tibetan term's literal meaning is "a site of worship." For a detailed study see Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Psycho-cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stūpa*.

[22] The "sequence" of *rang-bzhin* → *ngo-bo* → *mtshan-nyid* instead of the more common sequence of *ngo-bo* → *rang-bzhin* → *mtshan-nyid* is of particular significance. Being's or the whole's "eigenbeing" or "own most unique ability-to-be" as Being's or the whole's symmetry transformation draws attention to the experiencer's Dasein or thereness (*gnas-lugs*) in which the original symmetry (*ngo-bo*) continues reverberating. As the whole's open-ended closure onto itself, this eigenbeing is "functional" in the sense of making thought systems possible (*mtshan-nyid*). After all, in Buddhist thought, thinking-*qua*-thinking or thinking's thinking (*sems-nyid*) is primary and not an after-thought of an unthinking extramundane agent.

[23] The verbal expressions *grol* and *bral* describe how it feels when the fetters that have kept one a prisoner of one's figments of reality, fall off, and how it feels when they have fallen off, respectively.

Both the fragmentizing notions of (one's) going astray into the status of a sentient being within the six forms of life, and

The originary awareness intentionality of the regents (of the intrapsychic resonance domains) within the tripartite time span (holding good for the sentient beings and the approximation *erlichtet* regents) are of the same nature in reality's openness-nothingness-"stuff," (Being's) core intensity that has no name.

But even "sameness" and/or "non-sameness" are (ultimately) the undemonstrably ineffable (which means that)

What can be demonstrated and spoken of as being and non-being dissolves in (Being's) profoundness and vastness.

In the phase transition of (Being's) eigenbeing, unoriginated and unborn,

The openness-nothingness-"stuff" of thinking's thinking was there like the sky and a rainbow (in it).

Uncorrupted (and uncorruptible) in its just-so-being (Being's) core intensity, the ground and reason for all that is,

Is an undivided and indivisible thereness that neither comes nor goes.

It is the underlying force of (what becomes) the stirring of cognition and the intensity of its experience, without being either,

Unoriginated, not something to be searched for, non-referential, insubstantial,

The dimension of (sheer) bliss that cannot be made up nor has (any selfish) attachment:

Invariant it is there by itself, a widening vortex, beyond verbalization.

A mere cursory glance at this description of a "beginning" that is no beginning as conceived of and postulated by reductionist absolutizing thinking, reveals Padmasambhava's struggle with the prison-bars of language. No sooner has he uttered a word than he is challenged by it and forced to look deeper in his quest to fathom the very No of which he feels himself a part. This No (*med*) is not some non-being and, hence, not a co-implicate of some being. Rather, it is a sheer intensity whose core (*snying-po*) assumes the character of thinking's thinking or thinking-*qua*-thinking (*sems-nyid*). In this capacity the No becomes the ubiquitous experiencer's thereness or Dasein (*gnas-lugs*) as his (and, by implication, the No's) eigenbeing, his/its own most unique ability-to-be (*rang-bzhin*). As such it is the No-turned-experiencer's primordial utter (self-)sameness (*mnyam-pa chen-po/mnyam-nyid*) whose field character is the dimension of meanings, stored and/or in *statu nascendi* (*chos-dbyings*). This whole process can be seen as a gigantic symmetry transformation, diagrammed as follows:

med
↓
snying-po/sems-nyid
gnas-lugs/rang-bzhin
mnyam-nyid/chos-dbyings

But if the No that is beyond any possible names (*ming-med*) and yet that which we like to call the "beginning" and attempt to describe as an utter (self-)sameness (*mnyam-pa chen-po/mnyam-nyid*) in which, wherever we may look, everything is the same throughout all space and time, consistent with itself and everything else, a mathematician's perfect symmetry, how does the diversity of intricate patterns such as us sentient beings come about and how does their emergence go astray (*'khrul*)? It is the second question, implicitly presupposing the first one, that is explicitly put to the "ultimately existential teacher/revealer, the Lord of Being's mystery, who himself as an aspect of the whole's initial complexity and as such beyond the [ordinary person's] intellect's scope" (*blo-'das gsang-bdag don-gyi ston-pa*) by the audience's spokesperson *rang-gsal sems-dpa'-rdo-rje*.[24] The wording of this question is as follows:[25]

> Please tell us how in this Dasein-as-(Being's-) eigenbeing as stated before,
> The sentient beings of the six forms of life go astray:
> What is the "stuff" this errancy is made of and what is this errancy's mode of operation, and
> What is its evil?

The answer is a rather lengthy disquisition:[26]

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[24] On the meaning of this spokesperson's "name" see above p. 12.

[25] *lTa-ba la-shan chen-po rin-chen sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud,* 1: 109b:

gnas-lugs rang-bzhin de-ltar gnas-pa-la
'gro-drug sems-can 'di-dag ji-ltar 'khrul
'khrul-pa'i ngo-bo gang yin 'khrul-tshul gang
de-yi nyes-pa gang lags bka'-stsol-cig

[26] Ibid., fols. 109b-110a. The three editions of the specific chapter of this text, sDe-dge, Thimphu, and Taipei, vary in its spellings. The following is a consolidated version.

gnas-lugs mnyam-pa'i ngang-las 'khrul-tshul ni
stong-pa'i ngang-las 'gyu-ba rlung g.yos-pas
de-las rig-pa rang-sar shar-ba-las
yin nam ma-yin snyam-pa'i yid-du myong
snyam-byed 'dod-pas sems-su gsal-bar 'gyus
gsal-ba kha-dog lnga-ru snang-ba-la
'od-kyi dngos-po de-yi rkyen byas-nas

Errancy's mode of operation (starting with Being's) Dasein as a dimension of utter (self-)sameness is such that
In its voiding (*stong*) disposition a stirring (becoming a turbulence-like) disturbance (effects a) movement away (from its stability whereby)
Its cognitive potential (*rig-pa*) having risen from its legitimate dwelling,
Is experienced as (one's) egological mind (*yid*) pondering over (the latter's) being or not being (something) so and so, (and)
Its indulgence in its ratiocination turns into the radiance (*gsal*) of the mentality (*sems*) [that is the experiencer's ontic foundation].
In the lighting-up of this radiance in five colors
Their luminosity (taking on) a substance character becomes the modifiers in

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med-las yod-byung rigs-drug sems-can-rnams
snying-po ming-med rang-ngo ma-shes 'khrul
dper-na dmus-long mdun-na [110a] gzugs-snang 'dra
med-par yod-snang dung-la ser-po bzhin
kun-gzhi rnam-par-shes-pas gzhi byas-nas
tshogs-bdun shes-pa'i rtsal-gyis rang ma-shes
dper-na rgan-mo long-ma'i mig dang'dra
rtsal dang rang-ngo rang-gis ma-shes-pas
gzhi-las 'khrul-dus lhan-cig-skyes-pa-la
lhan-cig-skyes-pa'i ma-rig-pa zhes-bya
de-nas nga-bdag gzung-'dzin phyi-nang gzung
shing-gi srin bzhin khams-gsum sdug-bsngal myong
rang-ngo rang-gis ma-shes sgrib-pa byung
rang-las gzhan-du btsal-bas gol-bar lhung
rtsol-sgrub gnyis-'dzin rgyas-pas 'khrul-pa brtas
rnam-rtog brtag-dpyad gzung-zhen gol-ba dang
gdeng-med tshig-la 'byams-pa gol-ba dang
grub-mtha'i lta-ba bzung-ba gol-ba dang
spang-blang spyod-pa byas-pa gol-ba dang
bsgoms-chags nyams-la zhen-pa gol-ba dang
blos-byas 'bras-bu bsgrubs-pa gol-ba-yis
snying-po ming-med mtha'-stong rtogs-pa min
'jig-rten rgyu-'bras rtsol-ba mthar 'byin-pas
yang-dag snying-po ming-med rgyang-du'phangs
cang-med cir yang snang-ba rkyen-byas-nas
rang-rang 'dod-pa'i don-la zhen-pa-yis
yang-dag don-las 'khrul-pa rtogs-par bzung
kun-tu-brtags-pa'i ma-rig-pa zhes-bya
log-rtog khams-gsum sems-can thams-cad ni
dus-gsum gnyis-'dzin nad-kyis rab gzir-nas
yun-ring 'khor-ba'i gnas-su sdug-bsngal myong

The emergence of a sentient being in (any of) the six life-forms out of (Being's) No as an existent (and)

Goes astray in (its) not recognizing (Being's) core intensity that has no name (*snying-po ming-med*) as what it is:

It's like some pattern in front of a (more or less) blind person (who perceives)

The non-existent (white) conch shell as an existent yellow (one).

Taking the perceptual capacity in the ontic foundation (*kun-gzhi rnam-par-shes-pa*) as Being-*qua*-being (*gzhi*), (the experiencer)

Does not recognize the seven perceptual patterns to be the inner dynamic (of the ontic foundation) (and so)

Resembles the visual capacity of a (near-)blind old woman.

When through [the combined action of] (this ontic foundation's) inner dynamic and (the experiencer's) own inability to recognize (what it is all about), (the experiencer)

Strays away from (what is his very ground and reason of his being, i.e.) Being-*qua*-being, the co-emergent inability (on the part of the experiencer)

Is (his) co-emergent unexcitability (*lhan-cig-skyes-pa'i ma-rig-pa*).

As a consequence, his clinging to the dualism of an ego and a self, an apprehending subject and an apprehendable object, and an external world and an internal one,

Makes him experience the pleasures and frustrations[27] of the three psycho-cosmic levels (of his enworldedness that is) like a tree afflicted with bark beetles.

By not recognizing itself (as what it is) by itself (a sentient being) obscures (itself) and

By searching for (its beingness) elsewhere than where it is in its own (beingness), (a sentient being) falls into a trap (and)

By (its) belief in a search-and-find duality (that is) expanding (farther and farther), its errancy mode thickens.

Its obsession with the twin functions of dichotomic thinking[28] is a trap,

So is its expatiating on (anything) by means of untrustworthy words, and

Its clinging to absolutistic doctrines, and

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[27] On the basis of the single Sanskrit term *duḥkha* the Tibetan compound *sdug-bsngal* is misleadingly translated as "misery," "suffering," "sadness." Actually, the Tibetan compound is a fusion of two contrasting notions: *sdug* "pretty" and *bsngal* "worried." My rendering of the Tibetan term is not only contextual, but also attempts to convey the two-in-one meaning.

[28] The twin functions are selecting an idea and dealing with it discursively. The Sanskrit and Pali corresponding words *vitarka (vitakka)* and *vicāra*, respectively. For a detailed explication see my *Philosophy & Psychology in the Abhidharma*, pp. 49-51.

Its living a life circumscribed by rejection and acceptance, and
Its craving for relishing (its) attachment to the figments of (its) contemplative fixations, and (lastly)
Its realization of an intellectually concocted goal.
None of these traps are the deeply felt understanding of (Being's) core intensity that has no name and is devoid of any limitations.
Anyone who completely rejects the cause-effect relationship that is to be taken seriously in one's perishable world,
Casts his (and, by implication, Being's) really real core intensity (*yang-dag snying-po*)[29] that has no name, far away.[30]
Anyone who on the basis of what is nothing whatsoever yet makes its presence felt as anything,
Craves this (presence) to be his existential reality,
Takes his straying away from his really real reality (*yang-dag don*) as his deeply felt understanding (of Being's beingness), which (actually) is but his
Conceptual, totally fragmentized, low-level excitation/excitability (*kun-tu-brtags-pa'i ma-rig-pa*).
All the sentient beings in the three psycho-cosmic levels (of their enworldedness), itself a mistaken and perverse notion,
Are, throughout the three aspects of time, viciously tormented by the disease that is their belief in (any form of) duality, and
For long periods will experience the pleasures and frustrations of their situatedness in samsara.

The salient point in this lengthy quotation is the attempted answer to the vexing question of how can Being's Dasein and/or eigenbeing (*gnas-lugs rang-bzhin*) as an utter (self-)sameness or "perfect symmetry" that seems to be stable, ever develop or evolve into a variety of patterns, one of which is us as a sentient being (*sems-can*)? Padmasambhava's answer, reflecting his process-oriented thinking, is that this stability is actually unstable. Its instability is due to a subtle "stirring" within its stability or (self-)sameness that leads to the symmetry's breakage, which means that the original symmetry becomes spread across at least two different dynamic states that are experienced as a voiding (*stong*), a not allowing permanent structures to form or persist, and as a radiating (*gsal*) that is experienced as an auto-diffraction

[29] The expression *yang-dag snying-po* is synonymous with *yang-dag don* in three lines later on. The former emphasizes Being's "cosmic" aspect, the latter emphasizes Being's "anthropic" aspect, both of them inseparable from each other. The *yang-dag* in both expressions intends to convey the "beyond the ordinary." The literal meaning is "purer than pure," "more symbolic than symbolic."

[30] These two lines allude to the radical nihilists in India, known as the Cārvākas.

into luminous auto-condensations. As participants in this process we usually, because of our becoming ever more closed, see and feel only one of these dynamic states at a time.

The implication of this ontogenetic-psychological process is that with the emergence of the eigenstate's (cognitive) excitation/excitability (*rig-pa*) there also emerges the eigenstate's unexcitability (*lhan-cig-skyes-pa'i ma-rig-pa*). Once this symmetry-breaking has started it continues breaking until it reaches an utter break-up that is a sentient being's, our conceptual, totally fragmented, low-level excitation/excitability (*kun-tu-brtags-pa'i ma-rig-pa*) that courts and makes us fall into any imaginable traps. It is this blundering and falling from one trap into another that is called samsara, a highly evocative and aptly descriptive term for our "running around in circles" and our consolidating the traps into which we fall. As a matter of fact, it is this our letting ourselves be led astray that is what is its evil, outside any ethical or religious hype. From the perspective of the overall symmetry, the whole's utter (self-)sameness, the symmetry-breaking experienced as going or having gone astray into the state of a sentient opinionated being (*sems-can*), is only one of at least two possibilities. The other possibility is another story and will be detailed later.

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If now we turn to Padmasamhava's contemporary, Vimalamitra, for whom this going astray (*'khrul-pa*) was an equally important poblem, we find ourselves transported into quite a different mental-spiritual climate. While the leitmotif in Padmasambhava's thinking is the foremost Gnostic thinker Basilides' (*ca.* 117-161 CE) radical No, the leitmotif of Vimalamitra's thinking is certainty (*nges-don*), pointing to his ties to Christian circles in which ideas propounded by Nestorius (died *ca.* 451 CE) and Mani (216-76 CE) were rampant.[31] As proselytizing movements they made ample use of literary devices such as narratives, symbols, metaphors, analogies, and allegories. With respect to Vimalamitra, two relatively lengthy works among his prolific writings, attest to this trend.[32] To judge by their

[31] Nestorianism and Manichaeism florished along the Silk Road. On their importance and ultimate disappearance see Christoph Baumer, *Southern Silk Road*, pp. 48-51; Richard C. Foltz, *Religions on the Silk Road,* s.v.

[32] These two works are the *Thig-le gsang-ba'i brda' rgyud* (25: 49b-53b), and the *Dur-khrod phung-po 'bar-ba man-ngag-gi rgyud* (5: 40a-55b). The transmission of these texts is pitiable because, by the time they were collected, their contents were either no longer or

preambles they must have been delivered to different groups of different backgrounds. Thus, the preamble sketching the locale in the *Thig-le gsang-ba'i brda' rgyud* has this to say:[33]

> Once when I heard (Being's) calling, (it so happened that) the glorious rDo-rje-'chang who had overcome (what was negative), was endowed (with what was positive), and had gone beyond (this duality) resided in the enormous locale of the uncanny Si-la-mu-tra[34] (forming) the peak of an active volcano,[35] surrounded by an ordinary audience consisting of dGa'-rab-rdo-rje and seven *byang-chub-sems-dpa'*[36] and an extraordinary audience consisting of *rdo-rje-rnal-'byor-ma*s.[37] At that

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only minimally understood or made unintelligible by illiterate scribes and/or block-carvers. Politically and doctrinally motivated suppression of rNying-ma (Old School) texts resulted in the neglect of studying them. The quotations from these texts are based on a comparative study of the available editions with emendations from related texts.

[33] 25: 49b –50a:

> *'di-skad bdag-gis thos-pa'i dus gcig-na/ bcom-ldan-'das rdo-rje-'chang-chen-po/ me-ri 'bar-ba'i rtse-mo si-la-mutra'i dur-khrod-kyi gnas-chen-po-na/ thun-[50a]mong-gi' khor/ dga'-rab-rdo-rje la-sogs-pa/ byang-chub-sems-dpa' bdun dang/ thun-mong-ma-yin-pa'i 'khor/ rdo-rje-rnal-'byor-ma-rnams dang lhan-cig-tu bzhugs-so// de-yi tshe/ bcom-ldan-'das brjod-bral ting-nge-'dzin-la snyoms-par bzhugs-so// de'i tshe gsang-ba'i bdag-pos zhus-pa/ kye kye rdo-rje-'chang/ 'dus-pa'i'khor-tshogs don-ched-du/ ting-lnge-'dzin-la ma mnal-bar/ brda'-yi rim-pa gsung-du gsol/ ces zhus-so// de-nas bcom-ldan-'das brjod-bral-gyi ting-nge-'dzin-las bzhengs-nas/'di-skad ces bka'-stsal-ba/ blo-ldan-rnams-hyi don-ched-du/ zab-mo'i brda' rgyud ngas bshad nyon/ ces gsungs-so//*

[34] There are eight uncanny places (*dur-khrod*), traditionally referred to as burial or cremation grounds on the basis of the Tibetan word's Sanskrit equivalent *śmaśāna*. In the strictly Tibetan context *dur-khrod* means a place where corpses are left to be devoured by wild animals.
The name Si-la-mu-tra is not one of the known names of the eight uncanny places.

[35] Literally, a glowing mountain of fire. Since the locale is of an imaginal nature, this image, too, must be understood imaginally.

[36] Together they form a "set" of eight members. The number seven in connection with *byang-chub-sems-dpa'* is, superficially seen, unusual, but is easily understandable when we take *byang-chub* in an imaginal context as qualifying the *sems-dpa'*s who are intrapsychic functionaries of the Man/anthropos aspect of the anthropocosmic whole. dGa'-rab-rdo-rje would be their leader. Although dGa'-rab-rdo-rje's "biography" closely resembles the events in the Jesus legend minus the crucifixion, it is the "resurrected" aspect (*ro-langs*) that captured the evolving rDzogs-chen thinkers' attention, pointing to the "dyophysite" position of the so-called school of Antioch which was taught by Nestorius.

[37] This plurality is unsual. As a rule, only one *rdo-rje-rnal-'byor-ma* (Skt. *vajrayoginī*) is mentioned. The problem is solved when we understand the plural noun as *sems-ma*s who, too, are intrapsychic functionaries who together with the *sems-dpa'*s form a male-female complementarity. These feminine figures are "extraordinary" in the sense that they emphasize the anthropocosmic system's creativity.

time He who had overcome (what was negative), was endowed (with what was positive), and had gone beyond (this duality), was absorbed in his in-depth appraisal (of His being) that was verbally inexpressible. At that time, the Lord of mysteries (*gsang-ba'i bdag-po*) made this request:

Hi! Hi! rDo-rje-'chang who hast overcome (the negative) and art endowed with (the positive),

For the benefit of the audiences assembled here,

Do not continue sleeping in Your in-depth appraisal (of Your being), but

Speak of the sequence of analogies.

Then He who had overcome (what was negative), was endowed (with what was positive), and had gone beyond (this duality), rose from the in-depth appraisal (of His being) that was verbally inexpressible, and said: "So be it! For the benefit of (you) intelligent (listeners) I shall explain this treatise of profound analogies.

In the preamble to his *Dur-khrod phung-po 'bar-ba man-ngag-gi rgyud*, Vimalamitra leads us into a pre-eminently intrapsychic world of symbolic expressiveness that is progressively elaborated with an eye on the complexity that we as so-called psychophysical beings are. This preamble, like the one in the work quoted before, starts with a description of a locale that, too, is rather uncanny in that its teacher/revealer adds to its frightening character by assuming an ominous frown. The text runs as follows:[38]

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[38] sDe-dge ed., 5: 40ab; Thimphu ed., vol. 4, p. 586-7; Taipei ed., vol. 55, p. 233 columns 4-5:

'di-skad bdag-gis thos-pa'i dus gcig-na/ dur-khrod chen-po'i rdzong/ keng-rus-kyi ri-rab/ lcang-lo-can-gyi pho-brang/ gsang-ba'i sgo-bzhi btod-pa-na/ nyi-zla zung-gcig gsal-ba-na/ bom-ldan-'das brjid-pa'i khro-gnyer-can/ rang-rig-pa'i rgyal-po ye-shes chen-po bzhugs-so// nang-gi 'khor-chen mkha'-'gro lnga/ phyi'i 'khor-dag khye'u lnga/ gsang-ba'i 'khor ni lha-mo lnga dang thabs-cig-tu bzhugs-so// de'i tshe gsang-ba'i bdag-pos zhus-pa/

kye kye bcom-ldan gtum-khro-'bar
nyi-zla 'bar-ba'i gdan stengs-nas
rgya-mtsho'i nang-nas sku bzhengs-nas
chos-nyid klong-nas gdangs bskyod-la
bdag-cag 'dus-pa'i 'khor-tshogs-la
phung-po 'bar-ba'i gsang-rgyud 'di
thugs-kyi klong-nas rab bkrol-la
mgur-gyi bum-par chos-nyid dril
ljags-kyi padma-dag-la bkram
shangs-kyi rlung sgrom dung-gi tshems-dag-nas ston-mdzad-la
yon-tan sgo-lnga khye'u-lnga-la brda sprad-nas
mos-pa'i 'khor-la gsung-du gsol

Once when I heard (Being's) calling, (it so happened that) in the enormous fortress of an uncanny locale, (the universe's) axial mountain (in the form of a) skeleton, in the lCang-lo-can palace[39] with four gates leading to its mystery (standing open), there, on a radiant (throne formed by) sun and moon in union, was seated the "Magnificently radiant Khro-gnyer-can"[40] who had overcome (what was negative), was endowed (with what was positive), and had gone beyond (this duality), the king (who was the whole's) auto-excitation (and) the quintessence of the originary awareness modes, surrounded by an inner audience circle that was made up of five *mkha'-'gro-*(*ma*)s, an outer audience circle that was made up of five *khye'u*s, and an arcane audience circle that was made up of five *lha-mo*s. At that time the Lord of mysteries made this request:

Hi! Hi! Fiercely flaming Angry One!

After having bodily risen from the ocean

On a throne of sun and moon ablaze,

Whilst spreading (Your) luster out of (Your "*ex*-tensity") creativity vortex,[41]

Thoroughly elucidate to us who have assembled here as your audience,

This *phung-po'bar-ba'i rgyud*

Out of Your spirit vortex,

Condense its message into a vessel-(like) song,

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[39] The expression *lcang-lo-can* has the double meaning of a willow tree and an ascetic's matted hair.

[40] In order to emphasize the teacher/revealer's "*in*-tensity" (masculine) character his name, derived from the Sanskrit feminine noun *bhṛkuṭī*, designating a fiercely "frowning" female deity, has undergone a change of gender. This change does not involve any sexism, rather it shows that in this imaginal world, what we in the West sharply differentiate into male and female personages is rather fluid. In rDzogs-chen thinking, what we tend to call "opposites" are complementarities: none can be without the other and, more often than not, fuse into each other. Thus, while, here, the text speaks of five *mkha'-'gro*s, masculine figures, the eulogy at the end of this text speaks of five *mkha'-'gro-ma*s, feminine figures, and refers to the five *khye'u*s as five *byang-chub-sems-dpa'*s who as masculine figures together with the five *mkha'-'gro-ma*s form a complementarity, as does the external and the internal in a hierarchical ordering. On a still "deeper" (arcane) level, the "generative order" in the words of the late David Bohm, there is the pentad of "goddesses"(*lha-mo*).

[41] While the audience's request started with the "masculine" *in*-tensity character of the teacher/revealer, it now passes on to its "feminine" *ex*-tensity character that in its "outward-directed" glow is its creativity, *chos-nyid* "that which generates (*nyid*) meanings (*chos*). But meanings have no meaning unless there is some "thinking": *sems-nyid* "that which thinks (*nyid*) thinking (*sems*). On whichever facet of wholeness (Being-*qua*-being and/or Being-*qua*-eigenbeing) our attention may become focussed, it encounters a vortex (*klong*), spiralling upward and/or downward.

Pour its (content) on (our) lotus-(like) tongues,
Evenly breathe in and out the air-(like) nose, blow the white conch shell-(like) teeth,[42] and
Having conveyed (Your message) to the five *khye'u*s (at) the five gates (leading into the five) psycho-cosmic values,[43]
Speak to (us who are) Your devout audience.

The "Magnificiently radiant Khro-gnyer-can" now acceeds to the request by the Lord of mysteries, the questioner, the recorder of His words, dGa'-rab-rdo-rje, and the crowd of devout listeners by saying:[44]

In the beginning, on the axial mountain of the *dur-khrod phung-po 'bar-ba*
There stood the lCang-lo-can palace[45] (with its) Wish-granting Tree.
In its inner power, obscuring (everything) like the darkness of a black storm (and)
In (this power's) central power, (one's) desire-attachment that was raging like a river in spate,
Archetypal Man[46] was carrying a crystal lamp.

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[42] The above three lines are instances of Indian-Tibetan ornate poetry that is inimitable in any Western language. The first two images are relatively easy to understand. The vessel used in specific ceremonies is related to the chanting that, so to say, is contained in it; the open lotus is related to the outstretched tongue, eager to receive thevessel's content and subtly intimating its flavor. The next two images are more difficult to understand. The air is related to the nose through which breath passes in and out, subtly intimating the fragrance of the offering in the ceremonial context. The white conch shell is blown during the ceremony, subtly intimating the chanting's sound, its whiteness is related to the teeth with which the offering cake is eaten, subtly intimating the tangibility of what is going on.

[43] The multivalent Tibetan term *yon-tan* here has the meaning of (1) supramundane realms spilling over into one's psycho-physical constituents endowing them with symbolic significance, (2) an unbounded palatial mansion, (3) brilliant and symbolically significant rays of light, (4) a specifically elevated throne, and (5) a joyous participation in Being's wealth.
[44] Loc.cit., fol. 40b:

sngon dur-khrod phung-po 'bar-ba'i ri-rab-na
dpag-bsam-gyi ljon-shing lcang-lo-can-gyi pho-brang-na
rlung-nag mun-ltar gtibs-pa'i nang-shed-na
'dod-chags chu-ltar 'khrugs-pa'i dkyil-shed-na
khye'u shel-gyi sgron-me thogs
res-'ga' ri-rab rtse-la gnas
res-'ga' dur-khrod 'dam-du rgyu
res-'ga' 'khor-ba'i chu-bos khyer
res-'ga' rlung-nag tshub-mas khyer
khyer yang kho-la shi-ba med

[45] On the meaning of *lcang-lo-can* see above p. 23 note 39.

Sometimes he would reside on the peak of the axial mountain,
Sometimes he would move about in the swamp of the *dur-khrod*,
Sometimes he would be carried away by the flood of samsara,
Sometimes he would be carried away by the force of a black storm.
Though he might be carried away, death is not for him.

The audience is baffled by this answer and asks for clarification. Obligingly the teacher/revealer elaborates:[47]

Since you do not understand the meaning of these analogies
Keep what I tell you firmly in your minds:
The (title) *dur-khrod* (uncanny place) *phung-po* (aggregate) '*bar-ba* (ablaze)

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[46] By rendering *khye'u* by "archetypal Man," frequently used by Vimalamitra, I try to make a distinction between *khye'u* and *khye'u-chung* "Little Man of Light," a standard expression used by Padmasambhava. In principle, both *khye'u* and *khye'u-chung* refer us back to the gnostic idea of the epiphany of the luminous Anthropos.

[47] Loc. cit., fols. 40b-41a:

brda-yi don-rnams ma-go-na
ngas bshad yid-la nges-par zung
dur-khrod phung-po 'bar-ba ni
da-lta'i dus-na me-ri 'bar-ba ste
phyis-kyi dus-na gzugs-kyi phung-po'o
dpag-bsam ljon-shing bstan-pa ni
srog-tu gyur-pa'i rlung bzhi ste
lcang-lo'i pho-brang bstan-pa ni
phyi-ltar bstan-na 'og-min gnas
nang-ltar bstan-na thod-pa ste
'dod-chags chu-ltar 'khrugs-pa ni
nyon-mongs 'dod-chags chen-po ste
rlung-nag mun-ltar btibs-pa ni
phrag-dog gti-mug bdud-kyis khyer
khye'u sgron-me thogs zhes ni
rig-pa'i rgyal-po rang-snang ste
ri-rab rtse-la gnas-pa ni
rgya-mtsho'i mdangs-la gnas-pa yin
dur-khrod 'dam-du rgyu zhes-pa ni
tsitta'i nang-du rgyu-ba yin
'khor-ba'i chu-bos khyer-ba ni
rnam-rtog chu-bos khyer-ba yin
rlung-nag tshub-mas khyer-ba ni
dug-lnga'i dbang-du gyur-pa yin
kho-la shi-ba med ces-pa ni
rig-pa rdo-rje-lta-bu sku
cir [41a] yang shar yang kho'i sku

Refers to an active volcano at this time, and to the aggregate of visible patterns at a later time;[48]

'Wish-granting Tree' means the four (branches of the) life-force;

'lCang-lo-can palace' means, seen from outside, 'Og-min[49] and, a skull, seen from inside;

'Desire-attachment raging like a river in spate' means the psychic pollutant desire-attachment as such;

'Obscuring (everything) like the darkness of a black storm' means (one's) being carried away by the deadening forces of jealousy and stupidity;

'Archetypal Man carrying a crystal lamp' means the supraconscious ecstatic intensity as the king, lighting up by it/himself;

'Residing on the peak of the axial mountain' means (one's) residing in the inner glow[50] of the ocean;

'Moving about in the swamp of the *dur-khrod'* means to move about in the *tsitta*; [51]

'To be carried away by the river of samsara' means to be carried away by the flood of dichotomic thinking;

'To be carried away by the force of a black storm' means to have come under the power of the five poisons;

'Death is not for him' means the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (experienced in His) corporeally seen and felt pattern (*sku*), is as

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[48] Here "at this time" refers to the experiencer's participation in the imaginal dimension of his being, its energy likened to an active volcano, "at a later time" refers to the experiencer's being caught up in the world of colored patterns of which he himself is a colored pattern of reduced luminescence.

[49] This is the name given to the highest level of our world system, "in no way inferior to (Being-*qua*-being)," but since it is already the whole's closure or closing in onto itself, it may be said to be Being's approximation symmetry.

[50] The early rDzogs-chen texts distinguish between *gdangs* an "outward directed glow" and *mdangs* an "inner, self-contained glow." This distinction was lost in later rDzogs-chen texts. However, it is worth noting that in the request by the audience, reference is made to the outward directed glow of the teacher/revealer's creativity, while here reference is made to the "inner, self-contained glow." Stated differently, the audience sees the teacher/revealer's glow "out there," the teacher/revealer speaks out of his glow, "in here."

[51] The deeper meaning of this "clarification" of what had been taught/revealed by way of analogies, is the equation of the *dur-khrod*, the "uncanny place," with a swamp by which one's embodied state is understood. Again, under the influence of gnostic thought, this denigration of the body makes it an uncanny place that is not one's real home, as Vimalamitra makes one of his characters tell his parents in the course of dealing with errancy's multiple nuances. It may be of interest to point out that the German word *unheimlich* "(a place or situation) that is not (and never can be one's) home (German *Heim*)." In this uncanny (*unheimlich*) locale there is the *tsitta*, the "body's" imaginal "brain" in which the "calm deities" (*zhi-ba*) reside and which, for this reason, is a suitable residence for the luminous Anthropos, archetypal Man (*khye'u*).

(indestructible) as a diamond. (Hence,) whatever (is experienced in what) has become a presence is His *sku*.

Although in both preambles prominence is given to what is seen and felt to be an "uncanny locale" (*dur-khrod*), its overall tone is that of an intense light, unbearable to ordinary humans' eyes. This is explicitly stated when the audience asks the teacher/revealer about the nature of Being as the ground and reason for there being beings and about an elucidation of it by way of analogy. The elucidation, if it can be called so, is as follows:[52]

In the beginning, in the realm of happiness and bliss, radiating in its own light,
There (lived) a king (by the name) "All-around Lighting-up."
His throne was not founded (on any ordinary masonry),
Rather, its foundation was the ocean;
He did not wear (ordinary) clothes,
Rather, his clothes were the sky;
He did not eat (ordinary) food,
Rather, his food were the elemental forces;
In the absence of day and night, his eyes were those of a jackal, and with them
He had put darkness behind him and

[52] *Thig-le gsang-ba'i brda' rgyud*, 25: 49b:

sngon yul rang-gsal bde-ba-can zhes-bya-na
rgyal-po kun-snang zhes-bya-ba-la
'dings-pa'i stan med de
rgya-mtsho stan-du bting
bgo-ba'i gos med de
nam-mkha' gos-su gon
bza-ba'i zas med de
'byung bzhi zas-su zos
nyin-mtshan med par ce-spyang-gi mig yin-pas
mun-pa rgyab-tu bor
snang-ba khongs-par bcangs
skyon dang bral te rin-po-che'i spyan-la bstim
lus ngag gsum-gyi rtsal che-bas
seng-ge btson-du bzung
snang-ba gzhan-du bskyabs-tu med-pas
nyi-ma mchan-khung-du sbas
thams-cad bsad-cing zos-pas
tha mi-gcig kyang ma-chags-nas
gcig-pur lus-pas
gleng-ba'i zla med de
dgra-zin med-pas
shin-tu-skyid kyang sdod ma-tshugs skad-do

Kept light for himself (by)
Concentrating it in his flawless precious eyes;[53]
Through the enormous (strength) of the inner dynamic in (his) body, speech, (and mind)
(When) held in a lion's dungeon…[54]
In order that light might not look for protection elsewhere,
He hid the sun in his armpit.
Since he had killed all (living beings) and eaten them all
So that in the end there was not a single human being to be found.
He was alone and,
Since there was none with whom he might converse
Nor one with whom to grapple,
He should have been very happy and content, but (instead) he was restless.

Several points in this elucidation make it so very tantalizing. There is the subtle contrast between the realm of happiness and bliss and the discontent and restlessness of its king. Even more challenging is the emphasis on the radiance, not only of this realm of happiness and bliss (*bde-ba-can*),[55] but also of its king "All-around Lighting-up" (*kun-tu-snang-ba*) whose name, experientially speaking, intimates the second phase in the ubiquitous experiencer's in-depth appraisal (*ting-nge-'dzin*) of wholeness to which he is already pre-ontologically and pre-egologically attuned and attentively listens to its calling. Then there is the complementarity of the ocean (*rgya-mtsho*, Skt. *samudra*) and the sky (*nam-mkha'*, Skt. *ākāśa*), both carrying with them the idea of light.[56] Further, the statement in the

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53 This line in the sDe-dge edition on which the translation is based, seems to be incomplete or, at least, abrupt. The Thimphu edition reads

skyon dang bral ste yon-tan thams-cad dang mi-'bral-bas

Divested of (any) flaws, but not divested of the totality of qualities.

54 Apart from the metrical irregularity, the text seems to be incomplete. Also, the implied contrast between the inner dynamic (*rtsal*) and the open reference to the triad of body, speech, and mind whose Tibetan terms, *lus*, *ngag*, and *yid* (omitted for metrical reasons), are usually used in connection with the physical and psychic, is problematic, though not unusual. Could it be that these two lines are a cryptic reference to the widely circulated Androcles and the lion story?

55 Skt. *sukhāvatī*. In the Pure Land School of Buddhism, still prominent in Japan, it is the name of Amitābha (Infinite Light)/ Amitāyus (Infinite Life)'s paradise.

56 In the oldest Indian literature, the *Ṛgveda*, the ocean is also used as a metaphor for the sky, and, although *ākāśa* (sky) is a post-Vedic noun, its verbal component *kāś* occurs already in its intensive form *cakāś-*, meaning "shining brilliantly," in the *Ṛgveda*.

beginning of this elucidation that this king's food were the elemental forces, is elaborated in the statement that he killed and ate all living beings, implying that he did away with the elemental forces' concretizations into specific (human) forms of life. Lastly, it is the discontent and restlessness of the king that breaks up the luminous realm of happiness and bliss. In modern terms, "perfect symmetry" is broken by a disturbance within it. With this symmetry breaking the scene for cosmogony/ontogony and errancy has been set.

Vimalamitra now lets the Lord of mysteries (*gsang-ba'i bdag-po*) ask the Wielder of the Diamond (*rdo-rje-'chang*):[57]

> Hi! rDo-rje-'chang who hast overcome (what is negative) and art endowed with (what is positive):
>
> How has from Being's non-dual lighting-up *par excellence*
>
> The variety of the phenomenal arisen?
>
> How has it arisen as the duality of samsara and nirvana?
>
> Tell us, your audience, this (event) by way of an analogy that leaves no doubt.

The teacher/revealer declares:[58]

> Formerly, in the residence (by the name) Yangs-pa-can,[59] there sprang from the eyes of the Archetypal Man (bearing the name) Nyi-ma'i

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57 Loc. cit.:

> *kye bcom-ldan rdo-rje-'chang*
> *[gnyis-med gzhi-snang chen-po-las]*
> *snang-ba sna-tshogs ji-ltar 'char*
> *'khor-'das gnyis-su ji-ltar 'char*
> *ma-nor brda' 'di 'khor-la gsung*

Words in brackets have been inserted from the Thimphu edition

58 Ibid.:

> *sngon yangs-pa-can-gyi khyim-du/ [khye'u] nyi-ma'i spyan-las/ rang-gis ma-tshor-bar/ spyan-gyi nang-nas mdzes-pa'i lha-mo lnga/ yul me-long-can-du shar-nas/ de gnyis sbyor-ba bkye-bas/ rin-po-che brtsegs-pa'i pho-brang/'khor-los bsgyur-ba'i rgyal-po bzhi dang bcas-pa skyes-te/ chu-shing-[gi] snying-po-can bya-ba dang/ de-yi btsun-mo dang sras-su bcas-pa phyis skyes-nas/ chu-yi lbu-ba ces-bya-ba mdzes-pa'i rgyan dang/ rol-ma snang ste/ kun-snang-gi nyi-ma dang bcas-nas bzhugs skad-do// de-nas rgyal-po 'khor dang bcas-pas/ 'bangs don-du tshis byas/ skyid-kyi pho-brang bshig/ rgyal-thabs 'bangs-la bzhag/ rgyal-po bzhi 'khor dang bcas-pas dgung-la gshegs skad-do*

The above is an emended version of the two badly transmitted versions in the sDe-dge and Thimphu editions, respectively.

spyan,[60] without his noticing it, five beautiful goddesses (with their) realm (called) Me-long-can.[61] Out of their lovemaking (to Archetypal Man) a three-storey palace of precious stones with four universal rulers (in attendance) came into existence, (This fabulous locale's) king, Chu-shing snying-po-can[62] by name, his *maîtresse*,[63] and son came into existence subsequently. Lovely ornaments (glittering like) water bubbles, (worn by them), and (sweet) music (added to the charm (of this locale). (This royal triad) stayed (with the locale's overlord, named) "All-around Lighting-up."[64] But then the king and his entourage got involved with (their) dependents, and the pleasure palace collapsed. The affairs of state fell into the hands of (mere) dependents and the king with his entourage died.

In the strict sense of the word, the teacher/revealer's declaration is not so much a matter-of-fact answer to the question by the main speaker of the audience, as it is a continuation of the atmosphere in which the question and answer concerning the mystery of the ground and reason for there being anything is framed. But the intensity of the images in this world and atmosphere of light give the presentation a distinct flavor. There is Archetypal Man, all eyes bright as the sun, whose "seeing" is "creating" an animate world of lovely and enticing figures, reminiscent of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's words:[65]

Ich wache ja! O lasst sie walten,
die unvergleichlichen Gestalten,
wie sie dorthin mein Auge schickt

(I am awake! O let them reign
the incomparable figures
sent there by my own eyes).

The realm where these five goddesses, symbolizing the five sense objects, are encountered is of a mirror-like reality — real and yet enticingly elusive — with which Archetypal Man, seeing himself in them, falls in love and a "new" locale, a three-storey palace, comes into existence. The three

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59 This is the Tibetan rendering of Sanskrit name of Vaiśālī, (modern Basarh, 40 km northwest of Patna), one of the important cities in the history of early Buddhism.

60 "He whose eyes are of the nature of the sun."

61 "Of the nature of a mirror."

62 "He whose essence is driftwood."

63 Tib. *btsun-mo*, designating a young strong-willed woman.

64 See above p. 28 for its Tibetan word *kun-tu-snang-ba* and the role this luminous experience plays in Being's unfolding.

65 *Faust II*, "At the lower Peneios," vs. 7272-4.

storeys foreshadow the experiencer’s tripartite psychophysical existence, spanning the dimension of sensuous and sensual delights, the dimension of aesthetic patterns, and the dimension where the evolving patterns are hardly perceptible or not perceptible at all. It, too, is a world of light and sound and, lacking actual solidity, it is of a watery nature, the driftwood intimating some solidity. Its overall luminosity is summed up in the image of its overlord, “All-around Lighting-up,” the second phase space in Being’s closing-in onto itself. With its lighting-up a kind of geometrization of the emergent whole takes place and is intimated by the “four universal rulers” (*'khor-lo bsgyur-ba*). In this basically descriptive term, *'khor-lo* (Skt. *cakra*) refers to interacting energy centers of which four were of specific importance in Buddhist yogic anatomy: the navel, the heart, the throat, and the crown of the head. It is the presence of some darkness, symbolically referred to by “driftwood,” that leads the high-ranking king astray into getting involved with his low-ranking dependents and eventually handing the affairs of state over to them. The result is that his erstwhile pleasure palace collapses and he himself dies.

The so-to-say final phase in this going astray is rather laconically presented as follows:[66]

> Previously, Archetypal Man (*khye'u*) *kun-tu-rgyug* (“altogether on the move and speeding up”)[67] by name, had three fields “everything becoming born” (*thams-cad skye-ba*) by (their general) name and *nor-bu-can* (“of the nature of a (shining) gem”), *gzha'-mtshon-can* (“of the nature of (a) rainbow”), and *me-long-can* (“of the nature of (a) mirror”) (by their specific names). Into these fields of Archetypal Man, the bDud Ha-li-ka nag-po (“deadly black Ha-li-ka”)[68] planted the

[66] Loc. cit.:

> *sngon khye’u kun-tu-rgyug bya-ba-la/ zhing thams-cad skye-ba bya-ba yod de/ nor-bu-can bya-ba dang/ gzha'-tshon bya-ba dang/ me-long-can bya-ba dang gsum yod de/ khye'u'i zhing-la bdud ha-li-ka nag-pos sme-sha kun-bskyed-kyi sa-bon btab/ rdza-mkhan-mos zhing bcus/ lus stsal-pas/ 'bras-bu bden-bral sme-shan-du smin-nas/ mun-pa'i mi drug longs-spyod skad-do*

The above is an emended version of the available printed ones.

[67] In rendering Archetypal Man’s name in this way I try to combine the two versions in which it occurs: *kun-tu-rgyu* “altogether moving” and *kun-tu-rgyug* “altogether speeding (things) up.”

[68] The name Ha-li-ka seem to be a neologism coined by Vimalamitra from *ha-la*, designating a deadly poison. This deadliness is mythopoetically indicated by the term *bdud*, corresponding to Sanskrit Māra, the name of the historical (physical) Buddha’s (psychologial) tempter. The number of these tempters vary.

> seed of what would grow into putrid flesh (*sme-sha*). A female potter watered (Archetypal Man's) fields (so that its crop) the (individual's) body (*lus*) might shine brightly. When as a result (the seed) had matured into a factual body with putrid flesh, it was enjoyed by six men of darkness.

A mere cursory glance at this final phase reveals the presentation's structure built on the contrast between light and darkness. There is Archetypal Man, himself a symbol of light, in possession of three "fields" that by their very names betray their intrinsic luminous and process-oriented character. The jewel (*nor-bu*), symbolic of the *chos-sku*, the first closure of Being onto itself and yet opening itself up to Being's nothingness and openness, intimates its luminous and illuminating quality expressive of Archetypal Man's sublimity as being the anthropocosmic whole. But whether seen as Archetypal Man (*khye'u*) or the meaning structure of man (anthropos) and cosmos (*chos-sku*) or "perfect symmetry" (*mnyam-nyid*), there is nothing static about it, as his/its name "altogether on the move and speeding up" (*kun-tu-rgyug*) so graphically describes. This restlessness that, as we have seen, initiates a symmetry break in Being's perfect symmetry, spills over into the emergent second "field" as its radiating in the delicate colors of a rainbow (*gzha'-mtshon*). Externally "seen" it is associated with the idea of the *longs-sku*, internally "felt" it is understood as our always being-with-others. In this sense it sets the scene for specific intensities that are highly revealing, if not to say, extremely startling, by doing what a mirror (*me-long*) does. We have only to look into a mirror and watch how we react to what we see: ourselves who yet are others. We may not like what we see and misconstrue it as something threatening, or we may like what we see and fall in love with it by either taking it to be a guiding image (*sprul-sku*) or succumbing to its allurements and, again, in either sporting with it creating an imaginal reality[69] or, as Narcissus in Greek mythology, destroying ourselves by our unsatisfiable passion. It is this latter aspect, a concomitant side-effect of the symmetry-breaking process with its diminishing luminosity which makes us look away from what we really are, that in mythopoetic language is expressed by the image of a *bdud*, a truly deadening force that starts putrefying our body. Certainly, with this disfigurement of the psycho-material body we are a far cry from the luminous "body" of the primal *Lichtmensch* ("Man of Light," *khye'u*).

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[69] See above p. 30.

Now, in the world of matter, we are introduced to a female potter (*rdza-mkhan-mo*), the creatrix of this strange creature "embodied man." Creativity has always been the prerogative of the Feminine, and, in the present context, the creatrix, like a potter, works with the "material" at hand in the "fields" by watering them so that its crop, the human body might shine in the light that basically is his light. But this light is dimmed in the wake of its becoming closed to its original lighting and marred by the closure's inherent putrefacient power. In this state of darkness and putrefaction the now factual body is enjoyed by six men of darkness who are the five sensually sensory perceptions with their organizing principle of the ego.[70]

Cognizance — Reversing the trend to go astray

Any length of time of persisting in the darkness into which we have landed ourselves by having embarked on a course that has inexorably carried us farther and farther away from our luminous being, will become intolerable and force us, like sick persons, to consult a physician. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that at this critical stage the image of a physician is introduced.

Continuing with the literary device of questioning and answering, Vimalamitra lets the Lord of mysteries (*gsang-ba'i bdag-po*) request the Wielder of the Diamond (*rdo-rje-'chang*):[71]

> Hi! Hi! Teacher/revealer Wielder of the Diamond!
> In order that (we, your audience) may restore this errancy phenomenon to its originary awareness mode,
> Tell (us) by way of analogies (how) to reverse the trend (to go astray).

The teacher/revealer responds :[72]

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[70] However cryptic and eliptic the above account may seem and sound, there is little doubt that Vimalamitra, because of his closeness to Christian circles, was familiar with gnostic ideas as laid down in the *Apocryphon of John* and the *Hypostasis of the Archons*. For their details in these works see Giovanni Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*, pp. 92-93.

[71] Loc. cit.:

> *kye kye ston-pa rdo-rje-'chang*
> *'khrul-snang ye-shes ldog phyir-du*
> *bzlog-pa thabs-kyi brda'-rnams gsung*

[72] Ibid., fols. 50b-51a:

> *sngon yul mun-pa'i gling bya-ba-na*

Previously, in the country "Island/continent of darkness" (by name),
The potter "Creator of the All" (by name) had revelled in a sumptuous banquet and
Gotten sick with food poisoning from bad meat.
He summoned from the country "Of the nature of mirror and sun" (by name)
The physician "Definitive Healer" (by name).
The physician checked the patient's pulse and,
Having ascertained that the four (external) ailments
(Were actually) internal poisons,
He mixed the medicines (appropriate to each of the four ailments) into a single medicament and applied it to the patient,
Whereby (each) ailment could be cured.

In this short, but rather compact, quotation, we can easily recognize and appreciate the contrast on which this and many following allegories are built. There is, first of all, the "cosmic" contrast between the darkness of what is a limiting and limited domicile, an island, and the light of what is a mirror-like revealing and a sun-like illuminating dimension. Then there is the "anthropic" contrast between the potter who, like the demiurge in gnosticism, is pottering around in his world of utter darkness and getting sick by his own creation(s), and the physician, a competent healer in the best sense of the word. But now things become enigmatic. What are we to make of the four ailments and the single medicine to cure them all? In the traditional vein we might think of the four tribulations besetting man: birth, old age, illness, and death, but in the colophon to this paragraph/chapter Vimalamitra explicates the allegory to the effect that an individual's intellect (not necessarily intelligence) is meant, as it is preoccupied with "theorizing" according to the four epistemology-oriented thought systems, on its lower and superficial level, and with "practising" according to the four more experience-oriented systems, on its higher and/or deeper

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rdza-mkhan kun-[51a]bskyed bya-bas
ston-mo chen-po gcig bkye-bas
sha dug byung-nas na-ba-la
yul me-long-nyi-ma-can bya-ba-na
sman-pa kun-tu-gso-mkhyen bya-ba yod-pa bkug-nas
sman-pas nad-pa'i rtsa gzigs-pas
nad 'du-ba rnam-pa bzhi langs
dug khong-du song-bar mkhyen-nas
nad-pa-rnams-la sman rgyu-gcig-tu bsres-nas btab-pas
nad sos thub-par rgyur-to

level. It is on the ninth level, the level of ultimate completeness, that all the shortcomings and ailments induced by the preceding eight levels, are overcome and cured. In other words, wholeness and health go together.

This contrast between darkness and light is also the leitmotif of the allegory that follows. However, there is a marked shift in the tenor of this allegory. Instead of elaborating the preceding one's overview it stresses the individual's experience of the light that is his and no-one else's, dawning in him. The acount runs as follows:[73]

> Previously, in the forest *rtag-shing nag-po* ("black permanency tree")[74] (by name) in the country of *rGya-nag-po* ("black expanse"),[75] an extremist[76] "He-who-wears-the-armor-of-darkness" (by name) had staged a theatrical performance with six men of darkness being the effectuating (actors).[77] When eight champions with their king as the ninth (member) arrived from the country of *rGya-dkar-po* ("white expanse")[78], the six men of darkness, unable to (continue) loi-

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[73] Ibid.:

> *sngon rgya-nag-po'i yul/ rta-shi nag-po'i nags-tshal bya-ba-na/ mu-stegs mun-pa'i go-cha-can bya-ba gcig-gis/ ltad-mo gcig byas-pas/ mun-pa'i mi drug-gis thog-chod byas-pa yod-pa-la/ rgya-dkar-po'i yul-nas/ gyad-kyi mi brgyad-kyi rgyal-po dang dgu byon-nas/ mun-pa'i mi drug-gis khrom-bskor ma-nus-par/ rgyal-po 'khor-bcas-la bltas-pas/ yid shor te rgya-dkar-po'i mi dgu-po'i phyir 'brangs-pas/ yon-tan so-sor lobs te/ rgya-nag-po'i spyod-pa bor/ rgya-dkar dang chos bstun-pas/ mu-stegs mun-pa'i go-cha-can yi-mug-nas lcebs-so// mun-pa'i mi drug-la me-long gcig bstan-pas/ mar-me re-re shar skad-do*

[74] In the above translation I have substituted the compound *rtag-shing* of the Thimphu edition for the rather unintelligible *rta-shi* of the sDe-dge edition. Within the context of this allegory I understand the compound *rtag-shing*, rendered as "permancy tree," as an allusion to the eternity/eternalism claim of some of the so-called "heretics" (*mu-stegs-pa*, Skt. *tīrthika*) for whom this claim was as strong and solid as a tree. See also note 76. Neither *mu-stegs-pa* nor *tīrthika* carries with it the connotation of hatefulness, as does the theistic word "heretic."

[75] There is an inimitable play of words between *rgya-nag-po* and the following *rgya-dkar-po* involved. Usually, *rgya-nag-po* is given as *rgya-nag*, referring to China, "the area where people are dressed in black,"and *rgya-dkar-po* is given as either *rgya-dkar* or, more frequently, as *rgya-gar*, referring to India, "the area where people are dressed in white."

[76] This is the literal meaning of the Tibetan term *mu-stegs-*(*pa*): "one who has taken a stand on extremes," the extremes being either an eternalism (*rtag-mtha'* – eternalism *a parte ante*) or a nihilism (*chad-mtha'* eternalism *a parte post*).

[77] Unless the compound *thog-chod* is the block-carver's misspelling, it is an abbreviated form of *thag-gis chod* (spelled *thag-chod* in the Thimphu edition) from *thag-gcod* "to decide." The noun *thag-chod-po* means "someone who makes decisions quickly and decisively."

[78] See above note 75.

> tering (and sampling the goods) in what was their market-place, by looking at the king (of *rGya-dkar-po*), lost (all) interest (in what they were doing), ran after the nine men from *rGya-dkar-po* and made themselves familiar with each of their capacities and capabilities. By their having rejected the lifestyle of *rGya-nag-po* and modelled themselves after the morality of *rGya-dkar-po*, the extremist "He-who-wears-the-armor-of-darkness" became depressed and committed suicide. By a single mirror held up before the six men of darkness, the lamp (of the deeply felt understanding of their existential reality) began to shine in each of them.

Besides the contrast between darkness and light, black and white, there is a further contrast intimated. This is the one of the market-place, the doldrums of the dulled perceptions of the six men of darkness, the five sensory activities with the more or less blundering and rabble-rousing egological self (*yid*) as the sixth participant, and the refined world of luminous and transfiguring perceptions under the guidance of a king (*rgyal-po*) as the ordering principle in what is the complexity of psychic life, indicated by the number nine. This number sums up the eight perceptual operations as listed in the Indian mentalistic systems[79] with their totality as a ninth operation. The arrival of this ninefold complexity, the eight perceptive champions with their king, from *rGya-dkar-po*, a dimension of light, suffices to make the six disorganized and purely sense-based perceptual operators lose whatever interest they had had in their dark and muddled world and to live up to the values this world of light and meaning holds in store. There is no coercion involved nor is there made any attempt to convert the former sense-operators to some dogmatism that makes any convert narrower and duller than he was before. Rather, this light from the dimension of sheer light kindles the light that had been dormant and makes it shine in its splendor through the senses that by it detect ever new qualities (*yon-tan*) and

[79] Known by their Sanskrit names these are the Cittamātra and Vijñānavāda systems, the first emphasizing the summary notion of *citta*, the second emphasizing the specific perceptual operations. Their eightful perceptual character involves (1) the all-ground (*ālaya*) as a perceptual organ or operation (*vijñāna)*, (2) the egologically perceptual organ or operation (*manas, manovijñāna)*, (3) the affectively tainted egologically perceptual organ or operation (*kliṣṭamanas, kliṣṭamanovijñāna)*, (4) the body as an organ of perception (*kāyavijñāna)* over which the remaining four perceptual operations (5) seeing, (6) hearing, (7) smelling, and (8) tasting are spread out. Their totality constitutes the ninth operation from the perspective of it being itself an emergent feature. Closely related to this more or less "theoretical" pattern, is the so-called *Yogacāra* discipline which, as the word *yoga* intimates, emphasizes "praxis" in the sense of harnassing one's inner potential.

through the whole person in his being morally grounded (*chos*). For the demiurgic ego there is nothing left but to commit suicide.

With the dawning of this inner light that like a lamp[80] illuminates the experiencer's inner world with all its riches and thereby prompts the ego's suicide, the experiencer is now tranported into a dimension that allows him to gain a wider perspective and to see himself in a different light. It is here that, for the first time, the image of the crystal Man (*shel-gyi khye'u*), the archetypal Man of Light, the *Lichtmensch*, of gnostic provenance is introduced. By way of an impressive allegory we are told:[81]

> In the past, in the country *padmo-bde-ba'i tshal* the crystal Man of Light whose eyes were the sun, had planted a wondrous garden. In it grew a marvelous tree. Its leaves, blooms, and fruits (sprouted and) ripened at the same time and nourished all sentient beings. (Perched) on top of this tree, a cuckoo was singing melodiously. It had a ten-colored plumage and by it its voice resounded in the ten regions[82] and silenced all (other) sounds. At the foot of this tree (there was sitting) a

[80] In a certain sense our image of a lamp is misleading because we, materiality-minded, tend to attend to the gadget called a lamp. The Tibetan term *mar-me* emphasizes the light. Its literal meaning is "a fire (*me*) (fed by) oil/butter (*mar*)."

[81] Loc. cit., fols. 51ab:

> *sngon-byung yul padmo-bde-ba'i tshal-du/ shel-gyi khye'u nyi-ma'i spyan-gyis/ ngo-mtshar-ba'i ldum-ra gcig byas-pas/ ya-mtshan-gyi shing gcig skyes te/ lo-'dab me-tog 'bras-bu dus-gcig-tu smin te/ sems-can-gyi gsos-su gyur skad/ shing de-yi rtse-mo-na bya khu-byug skad snyan cing sdug-sdug/ spu-kha bcu dang ldan-pas/ skad phyogs-bcur sgrogs-pas kun-gyi sgra-sgrog-pa phrogs-so// shing [51b] de'i rtsa-ba-na gser-gyi seng-ge 'brug-gi sgra-can-la/ ral-gri kha-mangs-kyi mche-ba skyes-pa/ mig phyogs-bcur blta zhing skad sgrogs-pa/ gcan-zan phra-mo kun srog-gcod-pa gcig yod skad/ shing de'i sked-pa-na mu-tig-gi phreng-ba 'brul bcu-drug-tu bcas-pas/ kun-gyi rgyan-du mdzes skad/ shing de'i khog-pa-nas bar-snang-gi nam-mkha'-la/ rin-po-che gser-gyi nyi-ma shar-bas/ 'gro-ba kun-gyi snang-ba byed skad/ shing de'i yal-ga bzhi phyogs-bzhir gyes-pa'i rtsa-ba-na/ seng-ge gcig-gi kha-na me-long gcig thogs/ de'i nang-na shel-gyi sku 'od-kyis gang-ba gcig gsal cing 'dug skad/ yal-ga gcig-gi rtsa-ba-na/ g.yu-yi lu-ma'i nang-na gser-gyi nya-mo mig-med-pa gcig 'dug/ de mi-'gul-ba gcig 'dug skad/ yal-ga gcig-gi rtsa-ba-na/ bya khyung gcig-la srin-po mgo-dgu mig-gcig-pa zhon-nas/ lag-pa bdun-gyis 'gro-ba kun-gyi srog gcod-pa/ spyi-bo-nas thog-'bebs-pa gcig 'dug skad/ yal-ga gcig-gi rtsa-ba-na/ me-long gcig-gi nang-na/ shel-gyi khye'u zhal-drug-pa gcig-la/ lha-mo lngas bskor-nas/ sbyor-ba gcig 'dug skad-do// yal-ga phra-mo thams-cad-nas/ gser-gyi be chung skad snyan-pa sna-tshogs sgrog-pa gcig 'dug skad/ de kun-gyis mi-mthong ste/ ti-pa-ra'i bu mar-me'i spyan-gyis mthong-ngo// mthong-nas ya-mtshan-gyi ldum-ra de kun-la sgrogs-so skad/ sgrogs-pa thos-nas ya-mtshan skyes te/ kun de-la blta skad-do*

[82] These are the four cardinal points of a compass, the four interstices, zenith, and nadir.

> golden lion whose roar was that of a dragon,[83] his fangs were multitudinous swords; whilst looking in the ten directions, by his roaring he killed all the smaller animals. From the middle of this tree sixteen strings of pearls as ornaments of all (the living beings[84]) made them (look) beautiful. From inside this tree a precious golden sun rose into the atmosphere and made all the living beings come alive. At the lower end of one of the four branches that had spread into the four (cardinal) regions (of the compass), there (sat) a lion who held a mirror in his mouth; in (this mirror) a crystal figure full of light was shining. At the lower end of another branch, in a turquoise pond a fish (*nya-mo*) with no eyes (was swimming) motionlessly. At the lower end of still another branch, on a *khyung* a one-eyed nine-headed demon was riding, who with his seven hands killed all the living beings. From the crown of its head flashes of lightning were made to descend. At the lower end of still another branch, a crystal Man with six faces and surrounded by five goddesses, united with them. On all the smaller branches little golden birds were chirping in different sounds. (All this was) invisible to (ordinary eyes), it became visible to the lamp-(like) eye of (the) *ti-pa-ra'i bu*. (But) once it becomes seen, the whole wondrous garden will resound. Having heard this resounding, (one's) amazement will grow and all this will be a visionary (experience).

There are quite a number of points that make this impressive allegory so challenging, not in the least because of the many contrasts presented in it. Already at the very beginning that acquaints the listener/reader with the country as the crystal Man's residence, there is the contrast between a forested area, a grove (*tshal*), and a cultivated area, a garden (*ldum-ra*). Both of them involve a closure in the sense that each closure describes Being's or the whole's closure onto itself from a dynamic perspective. The forested area is then described as being constituted by (a) *padmo* "a lotus flower" and (a feeling of) *bde-ba* "happiness." In these appealing and subtly sexy images we can easily recognize the complementary and fusional principles of *ex*-tensity (the lotus flower opening itself up) and *in-tensity* (the feeling tone increasing in strength). However, in a certain sense, as such closures they are more like sub-closures within a larger closure referred to by the "name" 'Og-min, its meaning being "in no way inferior" to Being (Being-*qua*-being) or wholeness of which it is a closure in the sense that it has be-

[83] This phrase, *gser-gyi seng-ge 'brug-gi sgra-can*, which is missing in the Thimphu edition, might also be rendered as "a golden lion 'dragon- roar' (by name)."

[84] Literally, "those who move about" (*'gro-ba*). There is a subtle difference between "sentient beings" (*sems-can*, literally "having a mind" in the sense of "being of the nature of mentation") and "living beings" in that the former refer to the higher forms of life such as humans. The same difference exists in Sanskrit: *sattva* and *jagat*, apart from the Indians' insistence on the *sat* (*seiendes*) rather than on the mental (*citta*, Tib. *sems*).

come the highest level of our multilevel universe.[85] Contrasted with this forested area (*tshal*) is the cultivated area, a garden (*ldum-ra*) that owes its cultured quality to the crystal Man's planning, who now reveals himself not only as the excitability/excitation of the "field" but also as its organizing principle. In this dual role the latter has imperceptibly transformed itself from its crystal-clear translucency into a marvelous tree that, beautiful to look at in its sprouting leaves and blooms promising fruits to nourish all sentient ("thinking") beings, not only emphasizes the contrast between a tree in a forest and a tree in a garden but also gives a wider meaning to the notion of a garden than just being a mere vegetable plot (as its Tibetan term is usually understood). Not that trees in a forest do not bear fruits, but trees in a garden make their fruits more easily accessible.

While a tree is easily recognizable as presenting a distinct pattern, as having a *gestalt* (*sku*), the fact that this *gestalt* may have something to say, is less readily taken into consideration. This "having-to-say-something" is the theme that is going to be developed in the above allegory. It leads us from the rather primitive "vegetable" world into the varied "animal" world. Here, too, there is the contrast between the melodious singing of a cuckoo and the frightening roar of a lion; the cuckoo being perched on the top of the tree and the lion sitting at the foot of the tree. Neither the cuckoo nor the lion are ordinary animals; the cuckoo's plumage glitters in ten colors and the lion's *gestalt* is of purest gold. In addition, to the overall melodious singing of the cuckoo there is some volume that drowns out all other sounds that implicitly are deemed to be trivial and deafening noises.[86] By contrast, the lion's roar is more "substantial" and, primarily, serves to

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[85] The connectedness of *padmo* (otherwsie also known as *padma-can*) and *bde-ba* (also otherwise known as *bde-ba-can*) is well attested by a statement in the *dDo-rje rnal-'byor-ma'i rgyud* (Taipei edition of the Tibetan Tripitaka, vol. 55, p. 405, column 7) where the teacher/revealer rDo-rje-sems-dpa', surrounded by a triple audience, is said to reside in "*padma-can* and *bde-ba-can* of the supramundane-mundane realm of 'Og-min" (*'Og-min-gyi zhing-khams padma-can dang bde-ba-can*). Although neither an author nor editor is mentioned, internal evidence leaves no doubt that this text originated within the circle around Vimalamitra.

[86] This difference between speech as that which has something to say and verbiage as that which is a person's everyday prattle is expressed by the difference between *gsung* and *ngag.* Significantly, the Thimphu edition introduces the term *gsung* in the context of the cuckoo's singing. Close to home, where *gsung* prevails, we humans are sonorous beings (in addition to being luminously radiating beings), where *ngag* prevails, we are just noisy people.

frighten all the other animals, but then the "physical" description of the lion's fangs, however gruesome they are, and of the lion's killing all the smaller animals adds a new dimension to this animal's image. With the usual denigration, if not to say, hate of other belief systems in the religious arena, this killing may well be an allusion to the Brahmanical Narasiṁha (Viṣṇu's fourth *avatāra*) legend, in which Viṣṇu-Narasiṁha is said to have destroyed Hiraṇyakaśipu and the *daityas,*[87] the enemies of the gods, who in the present allegory are likened to small, but ferocious, wild animals.

Again the scenery changes and turns, first, to the middle part of the tree, likened to a (woman's) waist, bedecked by sixteen strings of precious pearls, cascading, as it were, downward.[88] The number sixteen seems to refer to the sonorous character of the image by suggesting the sixteen vowels of the Sanskrit language: *a ā i ī u ū ṛ ṝ ḷ ḹ e ai o au aṁ aḥ.* Then it turns to the innermost part of the tree, likened to a (woman's) womb from which a golden sun rises into the atmosphere, that part of the tripartite cosmos that lies between the earth and the sky-*spatium*, and lets all that moves come to light and be alive.

Once again the scenery changes by seemingly becoming narrower and more specific, whilst yet remaining highly imaginal. The ten orientational points[89] of the cosmic level are reduced to the familiar four cardinal points of the compass by which we orientate ourselves in our terrestrial world. Imaginally understood, these cardinal points are, in the first instance, the cosmic tree's branches and, in the second instance, the cosmic Man's four limbs, his two arms and two legs. The lower ends of these branches present a seemingly autonomous world of its own that yet remains connected with the source from which it has branched out. It therefore should not take us by surprise that the first image is that of a golden lion who holds a mirror in its mouth in which a crystal figure, filled with a proto-light about to radiate as a "real" light,[90] already shines brilliantly. Since, furthermore, in

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π[87] For details of these post-Vedic figures see Margaret and James Stutley, *A Dictionary of Hinduism: Its Mythology, Folklore and Development 1500 B.C.- AD.1500,* s.v.

[88] Before the number sixteen the term '*brul* is inserted in the sDe-dge edition. The meaning of this term is "to fall down" like leaves in autumn.

[89] See above p. 37 note 82.

[90] In process-oriented rDzogs-chen thought a distinction is made between *'od*, a proto-light or "virtual" light, and *'od-gsal*, a radiant light or "actual" light. This distinction is made for descriptive purposes. It reflects the difficulty of thinking two contrary notions, rest (*'od*) and movement (*gsal*), as a single dynamic notion, not reducing it to some static entity.

rDzogs-chen thought, the mirror is less a passive reflector than an active revealer, this image of the lion with a mirror in its mouth intimates the strictly “earthly” experiencer’s vision of his “not-so-earthly” crystal-like authentic Self.

At the lower end of another branch we encounter the image of a turquoise pond in which a fish with no eyes swims without any motion on its part. Like gold, the most coveted metal, turquoise is a precious and highly valued gemstone. Its deep-blue color aptly describes a pond or lake or even an ocean’s depth, just as the yellow color of gold can be said to be an apt description of the richness of a vast field at harvest time. But the real crux of the matter in this allegory is the fish with no eyes. Of all the animal images the fish-image is the only gendered one. While, without stressing the point, the lion (*seng-ge*) as a masculine noun, is a male, the fish (*nya-mo*) as a feminine noun, is a female. The prominence given to these images in the listing of the four branches and the contrast between the lion and the fish emphasize the importance of the role the principle of complementarity played in rDzogs-chen thinking. The most conspicuous complementarity that concerns and even shapes the ubiquitous experiencer is the male-female complementarity in which one pole engulfes and gives meaning to the other pole. Nonetheless, if it comes to an allegorical discussion, the image of the fish is extremely rare. Its *mystique* is beautifully presented by Śrīsiṁha when he lets the Lord of the mysteries (*gsang-ba'i bdag-po*) answer the question put to him by Sems-dpa'-rdo-rje:[91]

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[91] *Bang-mdzod'phrul-gyi lde'u-mig,* 6: 146ab:

chos-can mtshan-ma'i rgya-mtsho'i klong-dkyil-nas
chos-nyid gser-gyi [146b] nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal
kun-rdzob sgyu-ma'i rgya-mtsho'i klong-dkyil-nas
don-dam gser-gyi nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal
'khor-ba rgya-mtsho sems-kyi klong-dkyil-nas
sangs-rgyas gser-gyi nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal
'gro-drug sdug-bsngal rgya-mtsho'i klong-dkyil-nas
bde-chen gser-gyi nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal
mi-rtag 'khrul-'khor rgya-mtsho'i klong-dkyil-nas
ye-shes gser-gyi nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal
rgyal-ba'i mdo-rgyud dag-pa rgya-mtsho'i klong-dkyil-nas
dgongs-bshad gser-gyi nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal
rdo-rje slob-dpon thugs-kyi rgya-mtsho'i klong-dkyil-nas
gdams-ngag gser-gyi nya-mo gab-nas bag-la-nyal

The mythopoetic image of Sems-dpa'-rdo-rje, not to be confused with rDo-rje-sems-dpa', emphasizes Being’s luminosity and radiance in its projection into this image. A standing

From the center of the vortex of the ocean, the meanings-signs correlation (of representational thinking)
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, (Being's meaning-initiating) creativity;
From the center of the vortex of the ocean, the phantasmagoria of the commonly accepted (all-deceptive) reality
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, the ultimately real reality;
From the center of the vortex of mentation (*sems*), the ocean of samsara
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, the becoming-and-being-*erlichtet* (spiritually alight);
From the center of the vortex of the ocean, the tribulations (besetting the) six kinds of living beings
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, happiness-bliss supreme;
From the center of the vortex of the ocean, the trickery (perpetrated) by impermanence
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, (Being's) *Urwissen* (originary awareness mode);
From the center of the vortex of the ocean, the Regent's[92] lucid Sutras and Tantras
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, the explication of their intended meanings;
From the center of the vortex of (Being's) spirit (*thugs*), the adamantine task-master,[93]
There rises, whilst staying deeply hidden, a golden fish, (Being's) binding injunction.[94]

What about this golden fish having no eyes? The answer is provided by the language of allegory (*brda'*). By overtly rejecting the presence and idea of a physical eye (*mig*) with its limited field of vision, it tacitly suggests and accepts the presence and idea of the *in*-tuitive gaze's (*spyan*) unlimited

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characterization is its being *rang-gsal* "auto-luminescent," "radiating in and by itself." The dialogue between *gsang-ba'i bdag-po* and *sems-dpa'-rdo-rje* is more of the nature of a monologue by Being with itself.

[92] The use of the term *rgyal-ba* makes it abundantly clear that we move in the world of the spirit, not in the fictitious world that is commonly accepted as real.

[93] The term *rdo-rje-slob-dpon* signifies an anthropomorphically imaged intrapsychic force that ultimately is Being's spirit/spirituality (*Geistigkeit*) itself, not a concrete person.

[94] Literally and hermeneutically, the term *gdams-ngag* means "(Being's) speaking (*ngag*) that binds (*gdams*) man to his humanity." In rDzogs-chen thought man's humanity is moral, not opportunistically ethical.

vision that coincides with the *byang-chub-sems*.[95] Lastly, what about the eyeless and yet all-seeing golden fish's motionless (*mi-'gul-ba*) movement? It is not some kind of stasis and/or apathy; rather, in view of its relationship with what is referred to as the experience of happiness-bliss (*bde-chen*) and its concomitant *Urwissen* (*ye-shes*), pervasive of the whole individual in his/her aliveness, it is a serene, untroubled phenomenon that was known and appreciated as *ataraxia* in antiquity.[96]

Leaving behind the terrestrial and maritime dimensions, the allegory now takes us to the third branch of this marvelous tree. At its lower end we encounter the celestial dimension in which, as we are told elsewhere,[97] a golden-winged *khyung* is hovering. As a rule, the *khyung*, specifically in its being a symbol, ("the sensuously perceptible expression of an inner experience" in the words of the late Carl Gustav Jung,) for Being's spirit/spirituality (*thugs*) and hence spoken of as *khyung-chen*, is not anyone's mount, as is the Garuḍa for the Hindu God Viṣṇu on his amorous visits to the world of humans.[98] It is in this allegory that the *khyung* is said to be the mount of a murderous demon. This demon's nine heads intimate what is usually referred to as the nine spiritual pursuits that, in view of this demon having only one eye, are justifiably deemed to be dogmatic ideologies, the one eye corresponding to what in psychology and psychiatry is called tunnel vision and, in the present case, highlighting the narrow-mindedness and fanaticism of anyone who subscribes to any ideology whatsoever, political or religious. This murderous demon's strangling grip on the spiritual in Man/human is well described by his having seven hands that intimate the destructive force of the affective-emotional, deep-rooted in and welling up from within the individual's very being. These forces are (1) his cupidity for and addiction to the sensuous and sensual in what is his world of desires, (2) his cupidity for and addiction to the figments of the interpretations he brings to his world of desires, (3) his resentment and anger

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[95] See, for instance, Vimalamitra's *Byang-chub-kyi sems nya-mo bag-la-nyal-ba*, 6: 228b-238a.

[96] The main representatives were Democritus (460-370 BCE), his disciple Epicurus 341-270 BCE), and Lucretius (Titus Lucretius Carus, *ca* 99-55 BCE). A highly technical elucidation of this experience, untroubled by physical and mental disturbances, in the Buddhist context, is presented in the *Kun-tu-bzang-mo klong-gsal nyi-ma'i gsang rgyud*, 25: 359a.

[97] *Seng-ge rtsal-rdzogs*, 4: 140a-188b; specifically fols. 155ab.

[98] In course of time, under the impact of a progressive Indianization, the *khyung* was equated with the Garuḍa and its original meaning was forgotten.

when things do not go his way, (4) his pride and arrogance that shows no concern for others, (5) his unexcitability and dullness, (6) his opinionatedness, and his (7) undecidedness. Lastly, the strokes of lightning that come from this demon's head underline his destructiveness and are a far cry from the whole's all-sustaining, all-pervasive, and all-illuminating light that lets everything without exception shine in its own splendor.

Moving on to the fourth branch of this marvelous tree, this analogy makes us feel that we have come full circle. At its lower end we again come across the image of a mirror that at the lower end of the first branch, because of its revealing, rather than merely reflecting power, was forecasting what was to become of the crystal figure seen in it. Here, this crystal figure is expressly stated to be the crystal Man of Light (*shel-gyi khye'u*) who now is said to have six faces and to be in intimate union with five goddesses. The combination of the numbers five and six reveals an amazingly deep insight. The archetype of sixness, called the Hexad by the ancient Greeks, is found in countless hexagonal patterns throughout nature and their message is the unity of structure-function-order. What this means has been lucidly stated by Michael S. Schneider:[99]

> … the *structure* of any event determines how it can function, that its functioning takes place in an orderly sequence, and that this order of unfolding determines what the structure must be. Sixfold phenomena serve the visual representation of the Hexad's imprint of structure-function-order.

With respect to the crystal Man of Light this hexad "shows up" as his six faces that as faces[100] reveal his "intelligence"-spirit/spirituality, so necessary for the hexad to become effective.

While the hexad is manifested in both of what we would call the animate and the inanimate, the pentad with its manifestation as pentagonal symmetry is found only in the animate. Significantly it is spoken of in terms of five goddesses. As we have come to know, a pentagonal symmetry gives an organism the strongest arrangement of its skeletal plates. Not only is five the smallest odd number that can give a basically circular cross section, but

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[99] *A Beginner's Guide to Constructing the Universe : The Mathematical Archetypes of Nature, Art, and Science*, pp. 179-180.

[100] It is not without significance that in connection with the image of the *Lichtmensch* the word *zhal*, meaning "face," is used, while in connection with the demon the word *mgo*, meaning "head," is used. A face expresses something, a head is just a head.

also, when arranged around a central axis, does not allow for any weakness in the planes because none of the sutures lie opposite each other. Prosaically recast, the lovely image of the *Lichtmensch*, the crystal Man of Light, surrounded by and in intimate union with five goddesses, means that no center is without its periphery, just as there can be no *in*-tensity without its *ex*-tensity. Lastly, with respect to the subtle eroticism involved in the image of the union of the crystal Man of Light with the five goddesses, it may not be out of place to point out that this image lifts the whole situation out of the vulgar onto a sheer luminosity so much more so because, like the crystal Man of Light, the goddesses themselves are light (*lichthaft*) by nature.

When the allegory continues informing us that on all the smaller branches of this lush tree small golden birds are chirping, this reference to gold adds to the value of man's existentiality (*rgyud*) as propounded in the Tantras (*rgyud*) and their subsidiary explicatory works. However, all this is invisible to the ordinary eye (*mig*), it needs a visionary's eye (*spyan*) that in its seeing also hears the jubilant sounds all through the wondrous garden, thereby intensifying the experiencer's amazement and sense of awe. Significantly, the visionary's eye is likened to an oil-lamp by the light of which one sees what is hidden and what one has been looking for all the time without ever finding it, because it is not a thing.[101]

With this overview of the anthropocosmic whole's riches the scene has been set for its exploration as the necessary requisite to extricate ourselves out of the mess into which we have landed ourselves and to become again what we have been. How to go about this task and what it portends is summarily and cryptically outlined in the allegory that follows the above overview and reads as follows:[102]

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[101] Both the sDe-dge and Thimphu editions have what seems to be a name (*ti-pa-ra'i bu* and *ri-pa-ri'i bu*, respectively) before the word for oil-lamp (*mar-me*). None of these names occur anywhere else. As to Vimalamitra's text, both editions are rather unsatisfactorily transmitted.

[102] Loc. cit., fols. 51b-52a (in the sDe-dge block-prints, vol. 25, and p. 487 in vol. 5 of the Thimphu photostatic reproduction of a hand-written copy. However, a painstaking comparison of these two extremely sloppy versions of this allegory allows us to reconstitute what might have been its original version):

> *lha-khang gcig-gi nang-na/ gtso-bor shel-gyi sku kun-tu zhal-du bzhugs skad/ de'i thugs-ka-nas mar-me gcig-las 'od-lnga shar-nas/ 'od kun-tu gsal ma-nus-par/ lha-khang-gi sgo-na 'od bya-pho tsam-gcig kun-la snang-zhing 'dug skad/ de-la bltas-pas lha-khang-gi gtso-bo mthong skad/ der ya-mtshan skyes-nas gtso-bo-la bltas-pas/*

> Inside a shrine room, there stood as its principal presence (*gtso-bo*) a crystal figure (*shel-gyi sku*) whose face was [looking] everywhere (*kun-tu*). From this (figure's) "heart" (*thugs-ka*) [that was the "seat" of its spirit/spirituality,] there arose from (its pattern of) an oil-lamp five (rays of) light (*'od*) [to the effect that] the light (*'od* that was the source of these rays) was unable to radiate (*gsal*) everywhere (*kun-tu*). [Now,] at the door (leading into and out of the) shrine room there was a light (*'od*), approximately (the shape of) a male bird (*bya-pho*), that was illuminatingly shining (*snang*) everywhere (*kun-la*). By looking around (*bltas-pas*) it saw (*mthong*) the principal presence in the shrine room. Struck with amazement, it looked at this presence and became enthused, whereby, free from any deceptive distractions, it restored (its) triple entourage to its (original) symbolic nature (which meant that it) went into a snow-white crystal cave.

In this allegory every single word counts. At its very beginning, the reference to a shrine room involves more than intimating what in abstract diction can be said to be the last phase in Being's closure onto itself, so impressively illustrated by the suggestive images of a forested area turned into a cultivated garden and, ultimately, into a shrine room, each phase space carrying with it the undiminished wealth of the preceding one. It is for this reason that the allegory speaks of a principal presence within the context of a co-present wealth that avoids any solipsism on the part of the principal presence and is felt to be this presence's residence or innermost sanctum. No less significant is the fact that this principal presence is identified with a crystal figure or, if one prefers to state it more concretistically, a crystal statue (*shel-gyi sku*), not with a crystal Man of Light (*shel-gyi khye'u*) whose smallness (*khye'u chung*) is so often mentioned in other relevant texts. In addition, there is something unusual about this crystal figure/statue. Its face is said to be looking everywhere (*kun-tu*), where the expression *kun-tu* emphasizes, if I am permitted to coin a new term, a through-and-throughness, meaning that, in this instance, this principal presence as a crystal figure/statue *is* a face, period. Furthermore, this figure/statue is alive in the sense that it is spirit/spirituality (*thugs*) which, in rDzogs-chen thought, was "located" in the heart, not in the brain which rather than being the center of the psyche was more of the nature of its space-time displacement symmetry. Here, in the heart, it was felt and seen to be an oil-lamp (*mar-me*) from which five light (*'od*) rays of different hues burst forth with the result that, on account of this diffraction that

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byin-rlabs zhugs-pas phra-ma dang bral-bas/ 'khor-gsum yongs-su dag-par byas te/ gangs-dkar shel-gyi brag-phug-tu song skad

breaks the original symmetry, the original light (*thugs* = *mar-me*) became unable to radiate (*gsal*) everywhere (*kun-tu*) in its through-and-through luminosity and luminescence (*Lichthaftigkeit*). To sum up by recapitulating what the allegory has said so far: The sheer light (*Lichthaftigkeit*) of the principal presence, already infinity's transformation of itself and closure onto itself, transforms itself into its spirit/spirituality that as the principal presence's "heart" by a further transformation, transforms itself into and closes-in onto itself as a lamp that is "originally" radiating (*gsal*), but because of its radiance becoming diffracted into rays of light, is now no longer able to radiate *per se*, but because of its luminous character that it has not lost can illuminate whatever comes into its orbit. The language of the Tibetan text makes this difference abundantly clear. It does no longer speak of a *kun-tu gsal*, "a radiating through and through," but of a *kun-la snang*, "an iluminating everything everywhere." Here a word of caution becomes necessary. The differentiation into a *kun-tu gsal* and a *kun-tu snang* might suggest our familiar distinction between the "internal-subjective" and the "external-objective." The fact is that the lamp's illuminating whatever comes into its light's orbit pertains to both the internal-subjective and the external-objective dimensions of the experiencer.

The allegory now transports us from the "interiority," the experiencer's sanctum or shrine room, to a neither-interior-nor-exterior "locale," the door that leads into and out of the shrine room. It is here that the light (*'od*) that spreads its luminosity everwhere (*kun-la*) by illuminating (*snang*) all that comes into its orbit, begins to play its significant role of enabling us to see. There are two kinds of "seeing." The one is hermeneutical, the other is apophantic. These two kinds are clearly distinguished in the allegory under consideration. The hermeneutical mode is expressed by the form *bltas* of the verb *lta-ba*, the apophantic mode by the verb *mthong-ba*. The hermeneutical mode is dis-closive, making visible, not limiting. It is ready for the unforeseen and gives the things it then sees free play in showing themselves. In so doing it reflects, on the part of the visionary/experiencer, his capacity for openness. By contrast, the apophantic mode is concerned with propositions and statements, a *proposition* and a *statement* being in the words of David Michael Levin:[103]

> … the *proposition* posits, puts down, settles, sets down, places, positions before, or in front, fixing securely; and the *statement* states, puts

[103] *The Opening of Vision,* p. 433.

> into a state, an unchanging form, stopping all movement, closing the process.

In the present case, hermeneutical seeing "sees" a principal presence (*gtso-bo*) in the process of becoming interpreted as a crystal figure/statue (*shel-gyi sku*), apophantic seeing "sees" this presence-*qua*-figure/statue as the crystal Man of light (*shel-gyi khye'u*). This difference between hermeneutical and apophantic seeing provides a clue to "solve" the enigmatic reference to a male bird (*bya-pho*) in connection with the hermeneutical mode of seeing. As a rule, the male bird, pictured as a cock is a signifier ("symbol") of lust, desire, and sexual prowess. In the well-known triad of a boar, signifying ("symbolizing") dullness and related psychological states, a snake, signifying ("symbolizing") hatred and related affective outbursts, and a male bird (a cock) as just characterized, form together the innermost circle in *Wheel of Life* paintings. However, there is more to them than this traditional and simplistic assessment of a human's and other living beings' instinctivity. All three have a "cosmic-celestial" dimension to them such that these signifiers/symbols are rather narrowed-down versions of this higher and wider dimension as it is individually experienced. Here it may suffice to point out that the boar is "seen" as the passage of time over the years, the snake as the sun, and the bird(s) as the stars. In this sense, then, the male bird/desire/star fits well into the hermeneutical mode of seeing, starting, as it were, with a cock's crow rousing a desire that now becomes the curiosity to find out more about the presence. Such seeing fills the seeker with wonder at what he dis-covers and it enthuses him. Rather than being distracted by and caught in the deceptive apophantic mode, he is enabled to restore the triple entourage (*'khor gsum*) that makes up his psychic life, to and preserve it in its luminously symbolic dynamic. What are we to understand by this triple entourage? The image itself is taken from the teacher/revealer-disciple/audience relationship, but here it is raised to the intrapsychic imaginal level and points to what is otherwise spoken of as "Being and Being's lighting-up" (*gzhi dang gzhi-snang*) where the word "and" (*dang*) is not used additively, but is an instance of the trickery of language making us see a difference where there is none. Being ("the ground and reason for there being being(s)") is nowhere else than in its lighting-up that is its inner dynamic (*rtsal*). In its lighting-up as an illumination (*snang*) it enables us to recognize our own being as an expression of an all-embracing dynamic.

This intrapsychic, imaginal, "higher-order triple teacher/revealer-triple disciple/audience idea seems to have been first formulated by Padmasambhava by recasting the speculations of the gnostic Sethians and Valentinians concerning an "Initial Triad" in the service of a theogonic generation distinguishing between a god and a demiurge, and the Plotinian "Noetic Triad" concerning a hypothetical One, into an experience-based account.[104] There exist two works in which the preambles refer to a teacher/revealer unitrinity.[105] Since both preambles are important for understanding these triplicities and their audiences, they will be given in full. Moreover, since this imaginal "higher order" dimension is one of light (*'od*), it will facilitate its understanding when we bear in mind that in the recurrent expression "teacher/revealer king" (*ston-pa'i rgyal-po*) the compound "king" (*rgyal-po*) never lost the intrinsic meaning of its Sanskrit equivalent *rāja*, derived from the verbal root *rāj* "to shine."

The first preamble has this to say:[106]

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[104] On Padmasambhava's acquaintance with gnostic ideas see Herbert Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasamhava*, pp. 4 n.5 and p. 33 n.82.

[105] These are the *Rin-po-che sNang-gsal spu-gri 'bar-bas'khrul-snang rtsad-nas gcod-pa nam-mkha'i mtha' dang mnyam-pa'i rgyud*, 2: 287ab, and the *Rin-po-che bCud-kyi yang-snying thog-ma'i dras thag-gcod-pa spros-pa gcod-pa rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 2: 266a. The first of these two texts, important for the present allegory, is the more elaborate one. However, it seems to have been altered by the block-carver and/or corrector to the effect that one of the six teacher-kings is omitted and the number six "corrected" into five. The Thimphu edition and the Taipei edition are identical apart from the many spelling mistakes in the Thimphu edition.

[106] *sNang-gsal spu-gri* (for the full title of this work see the preceding note), 2: 287b:

ston-pa'i rgyal-po bsam-med brjod-'das dang
ston-pa'i rgyal-po brjod-med blo-'das dang
ston-pa'i rgyal-po dran-med yid-la byed-med gsum
ye-thog ye-gnas ston-pa rnam-gsum-po

de gsum thugs-kyi sprul-pa-las
kun-tu-bzang-po rdo-rje-sems-dpa' dga'-rab-rdo-rje gsum yin-no

ston-pa'i rgyal-po drug-po-la
drung-na gnas-pa'i 'khor yang 'di-lta ste
ma-'gags rgya-chad-med-pa'i 'khor dang
rtsal-snang yan-lag 'od-kyi 'khor dang
snang-tshul zer-gyi'khor-rnams ni
ye-thog ston-gsum 'khor yin-no

de gsum thugs-kyi sprul-pa-las
rig-pa'i 'khor dang yid-kyi 'khor
sems-kyi'khor dang rnam-gsum-mo

The teacher/revealer-king — unthinkable, beyond (the possibility of) being spoken (of and about),[107]

The teacher/revealer-king — ineffable, beyond the (egocentric and egological) intellect's scope,[108]

The teacher/revealer-king — having nothing to do with organismic mentation and (strictly) ego-related thought processes.[109]

This is the teacher/revealer-king (uni-)trinity that has been there since its beginningless beginning right on this beginningless beginning.[110]

From the phasmata[111] of this unitrinity's spirit/ spirituality [there emerged]

The triad of Kun-tu-bzang-po, rDo-rje-sems-dpa', and dGa'-rab-rdo-rje.[112]

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de gsum rtsal-snang bstan-pa-las
rang-bzhin 'khor dang don-gyi 'khor
'dod-pas bsdus-pa'i 'khor dang gsum

[107] Both *bsam-med* and *brjod-'das* in the Tibetan original intimate that the teacher/revealer-king is not a thing. Both *bsam* and *brjod* imply our tendency to think and speak in terms of things.

[108] This line continues specifying the impossibility of turning the teacher/revealer-king into something thematic and/or representational that is what the intellect tries to do.

[109] I have borrowed the expression "organismic mentation" from Erich Jantsch, *The Self-organizing Universe*, pp. 163, 165f., and passim. This line goes one step further in repudiating any reductionist thinking. The teacher/revealer-king unitrinity presents (not represents) a dynamic principle, for descriptive purposes analyzed into three phases:

bsam-med — brjod-'das
brjod-med — blo-'das
dran-med — yid-la byed-med

[110] What we tend to call a "beginning" with all its static implications is, in rDzogs-chen process thinking, a triad of phase spaces. A process has neither a beginning nor an end and only when we try to speak about it we introduce a beginning that has no real status of its own. The above rendering of the phrase *ye-thog ye-gnas* attempts, like the Tibetan version, to convey the paradox of a beginning that is no beginning.

[111] *sprul-pa*. In translating this term by "phasmata" I have revived this now obsolete word in the English language, because its connotation is that of an extraordinarily brilliant light. After all, in the present context we move in a world of light.

[112] This reference to dGa'-rab-rdo-rje is intriguing in the context of Padmasambhava's writings. He plays a more significant role in Vimalamitra's main work, the *Nges-don 'dus-pa*. Vimalamitra was well acquainted with Nestorianism in which the dual nature of the Jesus/Christ figure was emphasized. dGa'-rab-rdo-rje combines in himself almost all the events that are told concerning the Jesus legend, except the crucifixion that, if ever it happened in case of some such a person actually existing, was more in the nature of an unfortunate event. In the Tibetan sources the emphasis is on this person's resurrection (*ro-langs*) in his infancy from his presumed death, that is, his mother's unsuccessful attempt to get rid of an unwanted child.

The audience/entourage that was close to this
Hexad of teacher/revealer-kings was as follows:
An audience/entourage that was an unbroken whole (in its) ceaselessly (being present),
An audience/entourage that was a (sheer) light (by virtue of the whole's) inner dynamic's lighting-up (*rtsal-snang*) with its feelers,[113]
An audience/entourage that were rays of light (as the) manner in which this lighting-up was illuminating (what came into its orbit).
These are the audience/entourage of the teacher/revealer unitrinity (as it existed) right on the beginningless beginning.

From the phasmata of this unitrinity's spirit/spirituality (there emerged)
The triad of the audience/entourage that was (its) supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*), the audience/entourage that was (its) ego-based mentation (*yid*), and
The audience/entourage that was the (latter's) ontic foundation mentation (*sems*).
From the display of this unitriniy's inner dynamic's lighting-up (*rtsal-snang*) (there emerged)
The audience/entourage that was (the whole's) own most unique ability-to-be (*rang-bzhin 'khor*), the audience/entourage that was (its and, by implication, our) existential reality (*don-gyi 'khor*), and
The audience/entourage that was the gathering (of the above) by (one's) claims (concerning them).

The second preamble, though in many respects similar to the first one, is slightly more compact and has this to say:[114]

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[113] The literal meaning of the term *yan-lag* is "limb," especially in the sense of a person's arms (hands) and legs (feet) by which he feels himself into his environing world.

[114] *bCud-kyi yang-snying* (for the full title of this work see p. 67 note 105), 2: 266a:

ston-pa'i rgyal-po mtshon-'das dmigs-med dang
ston-pa'i rgyal-po bsam-med brjod-'das-pa dang
ston-pa'i rgyal-po sems-nyid kun-bzang gsum
'byed-pa-med-pa'i tshul-gyis bzhugs-so

'khor-tshogs kyang 'di-lta ste
rtsal-snang mtshan-nyid lta-bu'I 'khor dang
shugs-'byung rig-pa bsam-gyis mi-khyab-pa'I 'khor dang
yid-sems rtog-tshogs bsam-'das-kyi 'khor te
de gsum ni rang-bzhin gzhi'I 'khor-ro

This text continues listing the *rang-bzhin-gyi 'khor,* the *don-gyi 'khor*, and the '*dod-pas bsdus-pa'i 'khor* as a further audience/entourage as in the first preamble.

The teacher/revealer-king — undemonstrable, non-referential,
The teacher/revealer-king — unthinkable, beyond (the possibility of) being spoken (of and about), and
The teacher/revealer-king — thinking's thinking (*sems-nyid*),[115] goodness *par excellence*,[116]
Resided in an inseparable manner [in what had become their palatial residence].[117]

The assemblage of (what constitutes this unitrinity's) audience/entourage is as follows:
An audience/entourage that is like the founding of the thematic (*mtshan-yid*)[118] [by virtue of the whole's] inner dynamic's lighting-up (*rtsal-snang*),
An audience/entourage that is inconceivable by (one's) thingifying thinking [by virtue of its being] the forceful emergence of (the whole's) supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*),
An audience/entourage that is beyond the scope of (one's) thingifying thinking, made up by (one's) ego-related mentation (*yid*) and (its) ontic foundation (*sems*) together with the welter of divisive notions (*rtog-tshogs*).
This triad is the audience/entourage of (the whole's) own most unique ability-to-be (as the) ground and reason (for one's being).

In the above quotations that list, if not to say, summarize the whole gamut of psychic and suprapsychic functions, the insistence on the illuminating character of an inner dynamic's lighting-up (*rtsal-snang*) is of particular significance. It is by its light that we are able to see the truth of our existential reality that, though it is a radiating light (*'od-gsal*), mythopoetically "located" in our hearts as the "seat" of what we see and feel to be our true spirit/spirituality, alone cannot accomplish its "seeing itself." In the words of Martin Heidegger:[119]

Being needs the reflection of a radiance of its essence in truth.

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[115] The rendering of *sems-nyid* by "thinking's thinking" attempts to convey the dynamic of the *nyid* in this compound that would have to be "translated" literally and clumsily as "that which makes (*nyid*) thinking/mentation (*sems*) [what we call] thinking/mentation."

[116] This qualification of thinking's thinking is a cryptic reference to spirit's phasm Kun-tu-bzang-po.

[117] Though different in diction, both preambles agree in conceiving of this residence as an imaginal realm that is the first symmetry-breaking event.

[118] On the function of the *nyid* in this compound see note 115. See also p. 14 note 22 for the multivalent meaning of *mtshan-nyid*.

[119] 'Recollection in Metaphysics,' in *The End of Philosophy*, p. 76.

This is precisely what the allegory that initiated the above explicatory remarks, intimated and what Vimalamitra said in the colophon (which we would call the title) and elaborated to the effect that by this hermeneutical "seeing" merging with its founded apophantic "seeing" we can abide in and comport ourselves with the intentionality of our own most unique ability-to-be (*rang-bzhin-gyi dgongs-pa*).[120]

One final word about the "snow-white crystal cave." The color white, heightened by the reference to snow, serves to emphasize the purity of the crystal in its transparency and translucency, and the statement of it being a "cave" intimates the omnipresent experiencer's feeling of being sheltered from the ever present darkening forces that threaten to embroil him in a lusterless enworldedness.

However, this feeling of being sheltered demands that we guard ourselves against the assaults by the ever present darkness of things. This is done by "facing up to them," by "coming face to face with them" (*ngo-sprod*) not in the sense of confronting them aggressively, but in the sense of dispelling the darkness that conceals what they are in themselves, by trying to learn more about them and, by implication, ourselves. This is propounded in the allegory that immediately follows the one discussed. It tells us:[121]

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[120] "Intentionality" (*dgongs-pa*) is to be understood as a meaning-bestowing or meaning-positing (*Sinnsetzung*). In this connection Maurice Merleau-Ponty's words in his *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 154 are worth quoting:

> Let us try to see how a thing or a being begins to exist for us through desire or love, and we shall thereby come to understand better how things or beings can exist in general.

In the above quoted allegory (p. 46) and in the explicatory remarks (p. 48) Merleau-Ponty's "desire or love" was referred to by the image of a cock whose desirousness was interpreted as the experiencer's curiosity to learn more about himself. This curiosity cannot be gauged and it is a sad fact that curiosity is most often satisfied with very little. Summarily this fact has been intimated by the term *'dod-pa* in the third audience/entourage. The literal meaning of this term is "desire" and its extented meaning is the "claim" to have found an answer that is then propagated as a *grub-mtha'* meaning a specific thought or belief system as a finality.

[121] Loc. cit. (reconstituted from the two available versions):

> *khye'u mar-me-can bya-ba-la/ khye'u snang-ba dam-pa'i dpal bya-bas/ mar-me bzhi btang-bas/ yul bzhi mun-pa sel-ba'i ngo-sprod bzhi/ mar-me gcig-la bltas-pas/ yul rnam-dag padma'i tshal bya-ba-na/ lha-mo pan-tsa shan-ta-ma bya-ba dang/ lha'i bu gzhon-nu sred-byed bya-ba 'dug-pa mthong-ngo// mar-me gcig-la bltas-pas/ yul me-long g.ya' dag-gsal bya-ba-na/ rgyal-po gzugs-can snying-po padma'i spyan bya-ba-*

> Archetypal Man (*khye'u*), called sNang-ba dam-pa'i dpal ("Splendor of genuine Illumination"), had placed before Archetypal Man (*khye'u*), called Mar-me-can ("of the nature of an oil-lamp"), four oil-lamps (acting as) the four kinds of coming face to face with and dispelling the darkness of the four imaginally perceptible domains.
>
> "Gazing at" one oil-lamp, he "saw," in a domain, called rNam-dag padma'i tshal ("Symbolic expression *qua* lotus grove)," a goddess, called Pan-tsa shan-ta-ma ("Pentamerous plane of allurement"), and a god-son, called gZhon-nu sred-byed ("Youthful Lusting").
>
> "Gazing at" one (other) oil-lamp, he "saw," in a domain, called Me-long g.ya'-dag gsal ("Rust-free, brilliant mirror"), a king, called gZugs-can snying-po padma'i spyan ("Patterned core-intensity (having) lotus-(shaped) eyes"), surrounded by a tetrad of kings, and, without becoming inconsistent in saying something whilst thinking (of) something else, talking to his entourage uninterruptedly in a meaningful manner.
>
> "Gazing" at still one (other) oil-lamp, he "saw," by taking in the past and the future in a single (stretch of) time, the spiritual levels (to be traversed) at the same time.
>
> "Gazing" at still one (other fourth) oil-lamp, he "saw," without himself feeling and seeing, how Archetypal Man Mar-me-can was never separated from five precious archetypal men, serving him perpetually in (his) precious palace.

The fact that already in the preceding allegory every word counted, holds even more true in this allegory that is unparalleled in presenting the triune move from organismic mentation *via* representational thinking to self-reflexive mentation over time and space. As will have been noted, the presentation begins with and bases itself on the distinction between hermeneutical seeing, the visionary's gaze, and apophantic seeing, the ordinary individual's assertory mode of seeing everything in terms of their thingishness and thingifiability for manipulating them unconcernedly. Although this allegory repeatedly speaks of an oil-lamp (*mar-me*) and even calls Archetypal Man (*khye'u*) who, as we have noted before, is a sheer light (and hence is, in the strict sense of the word, a *Lichtmensch*[122]) "being of the

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la/ rgyal-po sde-bzhi 'khor dang bcas-pas bskor te/ gros dang blo mi-phyed-par'khor-gyi tshig rgyun mi-'chad-par byed-pa mthong skad-do// mar-me gcig-la bltas-pas/ snga-phyi dus-gcig dran te/ sa-rnams dus-gcig-tu mthong skad/ mar-me gcig-la bltas-pas/ shel-gyi khye'u mar-me-can-la/ kho rang-gis ma-tshor mi-mthong-bar/ rin-po-che'i khang-pa-na/ rin-po-che'i khye'u lnga/ rtag-tu zhabs-tog byed-pa dang mi-'bral-bas mthong skad-do

[122] Both the English word Man (with a capital letter) and the German word *Mensch* are generic terms, not specific gendered terms.

nature of an oil-lamp" (*mar-me-can*), we must be careful not to confuse its light with the gadget called "lamp." Hence the text, as far as the limitation of language allows, clearly distinguishes between the *khye'u mar-me-can* and the *khye'u snang-ba dam-pa'i dpal*, the *khye'u* who is not only alight, but also illuminates (*snang-ba*). This implied reciprocity has been re-thought and re-stated in modern times by Martin Heidegger.[123]

Even a visionary's gaze has its locale. It bears the cryptic name "Symbolic expression *qua* lotus grove," where "symbolic expression" (*rnam-dag*) describes a symmetry-break in the sense that Being's perfect symmetry (*ka-dag*) has undergone a symmetry transformation that carries with it the original symmetry's symbolic pregnance in its felt and seen expression (*rnam-dag*). This symbolic expression as a locale has a field character that is specified as a lotus grove. Actually, this field or, if one prefers the more abstract term, "dimensionality" (*dbyings*) that, by the way, is in no way inferior to Being-*qua*-being and as such called 'Og-min, the perfect symmetry's first symmetry-break and symmetry transformation, has two "regions." The one is the one called "lotus grove" (*padma'i tshal*) in this allegory and *padma-can* in other texts; the other is called *bde-ba-can* "of the nature of happiness." Superficially looked at, these two regions may be said to be adjacent to each other, but looked at in a more probing manner, these regions will be realized as forming a complementarity in which each pole tends to fuse with the other, so that, looked at from the deepest level of our being, they are seen and felt in such a way that *padma'i tshal/padma-can* is the visual expression of what is felt as the *ex*-tensity of the field/dimensionality and *bde-ba-can* is the feeling-tone of the vision as the *in*-tensity of this very field/dimensionality, which means that *ex*-tensity and *in*-tensity are not two different entities, but two different modes of experiencing a unitary field/dimensionality. The application of these "abstract" ideas of *ex*-tensity and *in*-tensity to a locale that, as we have noted before, is the whole's, Being-*qua*-beings's closure onto itself and as the first symmetry break constitutes the imaginal dimension of the ubiquitous experiencer who is us in this symmetry-breaking process, gains added significance in the allegory's reference to the actors in this dimension that prefig-

[123]'Aletheia' in *Early Greek Thinking*, p. 12O, as quoted by David Michael Levin, *The Opening of Vision*, p. 448:

> …we human beings'are not only illuminated in the lighting, but are also enlightened from it and toward it.'

ures, not predetermines, what eventually will become an actual male-female complementarity in the emerging worldview. These actors are spoken of in terms of a goddess (*lha-mo*) and a god-son (*lha'i bu*). As is so often the case, the language we use, can be extremely misleading; neither term is to be understood in the sense in which a literalist would speak of them. In each term, the component *lha*, corresponding to the Sanskrit word *deva* of which it is its Tibetan translation, signifies a luminous quality that in the case of *lha-mo* (Skt. *devī*) is experienced as being feminine. Slightly more complicated is the significance of the term *lha'i bu*, the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit word *devaputra*. In its Sanskrit context it denotes an intellectually deadening power.[124] In the present allegory it is a mythopoetic appellation of a young male whose name "Youthful Lusting" describes both his "physical" appearance as youthful (*gzhon-nu*) and his "mental" disposition as intensely lusting (*sred-byed*). Except for the first two syllables in the name of the goddess, *pan-ta/pan-tsa*,[125] corresponding to the Sanskrit word *pañca* meaning "five," the rest of her name is, if it is supposed to be a Sanskrit word, unrecognizable as such and remains unintelligible. It is because of the context of her being complementary to him as *in*-tensity, that I have paraphrased her full name by "pentamerous plane of allurements" in order to convey her *ex*-tensity made up of five sensuous dimensions after which, in their totality, he is lusting.

In the same manner as the gazing at an oil-lamp's illuminating light in the first instance of what is said to be one's coming face to face with oneself (one's self) reveals a locale, so also the second instance begins with a reference to a locale that is described as a rust-free, that is, polished mirror which for that reason shines brilliantly. It is because of its brilliance (*gsal*) that its image frequently occurs as a symbol of the whole's spirit/spirituality (*thugs*) that in its dynamic capacity is less a passive receptor than it is a generative revealing force. As is customary for rDzogs-chen process-oriented thinking with its moving from the external (*phyi*) *via* the internal (*nang*) to the arcane (*gsang*) and, in its endeavor not to become stagnant, even to a fourth "more-arcane-than-arcane" (*yang-gsang*) level, the mirror illustrates this process in which the experiencer as an integral aspect *qua* participant is actively involved by polishing this "instrument" (as

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124 See Herbert Guenther, *The Creative Vision*, p. 149 n. 210.

125 The sDe-dge edition reads her name as *pan-ta shan-ma*; the Thimphu edition reads her name as *pan-tsa shan-ta-ma*.

which we conceive of what actually is our mentation/spirituality).[126] So what the mirror reveals is the complexity and richness of that-for-which-there-is-no-name (*ming-med*), of which we caught a glimpse in the figures of a goddess (*lha-mo*) and a god-son (*lha'i bu*), in a more tangible pattern that has lost nothing of the original dynamic. The allegory attempts to convey what is seen by speaking of it as a "king" whose very nature, as noted before, was light's brilliance, and so was depicted as and given the name of "the core-intensity of what is of the nature of a distinctly perceptible pattern." This king's further appellation of "having lotus-(shaped) eyes" intimates the unfolding of the dimension under consideration. It goes without saying that a king, however high he ranks in a social context, has his entourage with which he constantly communicates regardless of how limited its intellectual acumen and field of interests may be. The statement that this entourage constitutes a tetrad intimates, abstractly speaking, the whole's self-geometrization and, experientially speaking, the experiencer's orienting himself in his environment, an important task in coming face to face with one's self (*ngo-sprod*).

There exists an intimate relationship between these two facets of the fourfold encounter with one's self. Both have a spatial character as indicated by the locale in which the encounter takes place. As a cover term for these basically intrapsychic realities I propose the Latin word *spatium* to avoid any confusion with and reduction to what is commonly referred to as space (Newtonian, Einsteinian, Riemannian) that, in rDzogs-chen process-oriented thinking, is not absolute, but an emergent phenomenon. As such it carries with it its origin's dynamic that may be described as pattern detection. Certainly, there stands nothing in the way of conceiving Archetypal Man (*khye'u*), specifically when he is referred to as a crystal (*shel*), and the flame of an oil-lamp (*mar-me*) as a spatial pattern. It is here that the image and idea of a pre-eminently corporeally seen and felt pattern, technically known as *sku*, is introduced. From among the many patterns that circumscribe man's humanity in being the fore-structures of his triune complexity that is analytically-reductionistically spoken of in terms of body, speech,

126 With respect to the image of the mirror, the favorite number is three. See, for instance, Padmasambhava's *lTa-ba la-shan chen-po rin-chen sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 1: 115a. But, by subdividing each mirror into three mirrors, the number increases to nine. See Padmasambhava's *sNang-srid kha-sbyor*, 2: 255a. In the *Nor-bu rin-po-che 'od-'bar-ba'i rgyud*, ascribed to dGa'-rab-rdo-rje and his circle, (Taipei ed., vol. 55, p. 404 columns 3-4) six mirrors are listed.

and mind, two have been singled out as illustrating the *spatium* (spaciousness/spatiality) of his mind/spirit as *in*-tensity and the *spatium* (spaciousness/spatiality) of his sociality as *ex*-tensity reflecting and revealing the richness of his mind/spirit. The first *spatium* is the *chos-sku*, the second *spatium* is the *longs-sku*. Both are in essence, if this is still the right word, expressions of Being's *Urwissen* (originary awareness, *ye-shes*), singly or multiply. Singly, the *chos-sku*, the pattern (*sku*) in which Being's meaning (*chos*) expresses itself as being the fore-structure of our corporeal-*cum*-mental/spiritual being[127] in its meaningfulness, is likened to a crystal. With his usual cautiousness Padmasambhava presents this comparison in the following words:[128]

> The crystal (as which) spirit (as a) mirroring (is envisioned)
> Is not the *chos-sku* (in the sense of some) particular existent;
> Rather, know it to be similar to (a mirror) in many respects:
> Just as a crystal has neither something exterior nor interior about it;
> So also know your own supraconscious ecstatic intensity, the *chos-sku*,
> As having neither something exterior nor interior about it;

[127] "Corporeity/corporeality" (*sku*) and "mentality/spirituality" (*thugs*) are alike in being luminous phenomena. Thus, in his *sPros-bral don-gsal*, 1: 86b, Padmasambhava states that "because [wholeness] is flawless, invariant, and sensitive to everything, it is (spoken of as) spirit" (*dri-ma med-pa dang/ mi-'gyur-ba dang/ thams-cad mkhyen-pas thugs-so*), and "because it is endowed with a glorious brilliance it is (spoken of as) *sku*."

[128] *sPros-bral don-gsal*, 1: 34ab:

> *thugs-kyi me-long man-shel'di*
> *chos-sku dngos ni ma-yin te*
> *'di nyid cir 'drar shes-par bya*
> *man-shel phyi-nang med-pa ltar*
> *rang-gi rig-pa chos-sku yang*
> *phyi-nang med-par shes-par bya*
> *man-shel mdun-rgyab med-pa ltar*
> *chos-sku yang ni mdun-rgyab med*
> *man-shel zang-thal gsal-ba bzhin*
> *chos-sku dri-med dag-pa zang-thal yin*
> *'di-na nang-med nang-na*
> *skyon-med 'od-lnga gsal-ba ltar*
> *chos-sku zang-thal nang-na ni*
> *sku-gsum nang-gsal-du ni [34b] gnas-pa ste*
> *stong-pa ye-shes snying-po-can-du shes-par gyis*
> *dpe 'di'i nang-nas 'od-lnga phyi-ru 'char-ba ltar*
> *chos-kyi sku-las gzugs-sku gnyis*
> *gdul-bya gnyis-la snang-ba'o*

Just as a crystal has neither a front nor a back,
So also the *chos-sku* has neither a front nor a back;
Just as a crystal is dissipatively (*zang-thal*)[129] radiant,
So also the *chos-sku* is clean, pure,[130] and dissipative;
Just as in its interior that is no interior (whatsoever).[131]
Five flawless luminosities are radiating,
So also in the interior of the dissipative *chos-sku*
The three fore-structures[132] (of one's existentiality) are present as an inner radiance.
Know them to be (Being's) nothingness in being the core-intensity of its *Urwissen*.

Padmasambhava concludes this illustrative dissertation of how to understand what is meant by *chos-sku* with the following words:[133]

Just as (it has been said) in this simile that five luminosities arise from an interior to (shine) outwardly,
So the two visibly felt patterns (*gzugs-sku*)[134] arise from the *chos-sku*
To make their two (participating) representatives (in the overall process) (*gdul-bya*)[135] visible and shine (in their luminous quality).

The upshot of the matter is that all the fore-structures (*sku*) of our existentiality are dynamic phenomena, not static entities.

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129 This term describes the experience of coming up to some impenetrable wall that suddenly gives way so that one can go "right through."

130 The two terms "clean" (*dri-med*) and "pure" (*dag-pa*) have the added connotation of being "odorless" and "symbolically expressive."

131 This line and the following one are run together in the two available editions and run counter to the meter(s) employed. The first line is short by one syllable, and the second line contains a contextually unintelligibe *rkyen-med* that I have changed into *skyon-med* meaning "flawless," "unblemished." In these two lines the *dri-med* and *skyon-med* are used as mutually enhancing qualifiers.

132 These are the *chos-sku,* the *longs-sku,* and the *sprul-sku*.

133 Loc. cit.:

dpe 'di'i nang-nas 'od-lnga phyi-ru 'char-ba ltar
chos-kyi sku-las gzugs-sku gnyis
gdul-bya gnyis-la snang-ba'o

134 These are the *longs-sku* summing up our being-with-others, in other words, our social dimension, and the *sprul-sku* intimating our being guiding images in our growing-up to our humanity.

135 The literal meaning of this word is "someone to be disciplined." Its Sanskrit equivalent is *vineyya* "someone to be led out of (samsara)." The difference in perspective is worth noticing.

While in this fourfold coming face to face with one's self (*ngo-sprod*) the image of a crystal is related to the *chos-sku* as the pattern that makes us experience ourselves as presenting a meaning (*chos*), the image of a mirror is related to the *longs-sku*, the pattern that makes us experience ourselves as always being-with and communicating-with-others. As the allegory expressly states, this is the second phase in coming face to face with one's self. Being of the nature of spirit, the mirror is less a passive reflector than an active revealer. True, for a gadget-minded person the mirror may be on the same level as an oil-lamp, its function of revealing or spreading light being an incidental quale; for the visionary's hermeneutical gaze this quale is of particular significance, because being of the nature of spirit as an *Urwissen* (*ye-shes*), it is itself this *Urwissen* in an unfolding panorama with each of its four cardinal orientation points being such an *Urwissen*, allegorically spoken of as a tetrad of kings.

This strange dual nature of a mirror, on the one hand, receiving and reflecting what is placed before it and, on the other hand, revealing the inner nature of what it has received, is well brought out by Padmasambhava when he conceives of the mirror as the principle of creativity (*chos-nyid*) as the complementarity to the principle of thinking's thinking (*sems-nyid*). In view of the radicalism of his "No" that reflects his acquaintance with the foremost Gnostic thinker Basilides' ideas,[136] that which is placed before a mirror is already at best a simulacrum (*'dra-'bag*). Of this he then goes on speaking by way of elaborating it with respect to the *longs-sku:*[137]

> When a simulacrum is placed before a mirror,
> Similar to a clear and radiating mirror,
> (Being's) creativity is clear and radiating:
> Just as the (simulacrum's) reflections lighting up in the mirror have no eigenbeing,

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[136] For details see Herbert Genther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*, s.v.

[137] Loc. cit.:

> *'dra-'bag me-long ngos-la bstan-pa'i tshe*
> *me-long dag-cing gsal-ba ltar*
> *chos-nyid dag-cing gsal-ba'o*
> *me-long nang-na gzugs-brnyan snang-la rang-bzhin-med-par ltar*
> *chos-nyid klong-na sku-lnga snang-la rang-bzhin-med-par gsal-bar gnas*

> So also the pentad of *sku*s,[138] lighting up in the vortex of (Being's principle of) creativity, has no eigenbeing and stays there in its radiance.

As the allegory states, the central king's communication with his four vassals in this *spatium* (spaciousness/spatiality) is an uninterrupted flow of *in*-formative messages that reflect the integrity and consistency of the speaker who is not saying something different from what he is thinking.

If now we turn to the third phase of this coming face to face with one's self, we notice that there is no reference to a locale, because we have moved into the dimension of time, epitomized and glorified in Western thinking by the "here and now" slogan. But, as the allegory makes abundantly clear, it is the Now in which what we call past, present, and future fuse into a unique experience in which the past as well as the future becomes effective in the present.[139] As an experience this phase is related to the *sprul-sku*, an extraordinarily brilliant light, somehow seen by one's self and even by others, and felt as a guiding image in the strict sense of the word, so much more so as it works from and out of the deepest resources of one's being, the imaginal dimension, not from the quasi-reality of and about which theologians, philosophers, and cultists squabble endlessly.

In the numerically fourth phase of coming face to face with one's self as the unitary character of the three fore-structures, in which neither fore-structure allows itself to be added to or subtracted from the other (*'du-'bral med-pa*), the crucial words that are likely to be misunderstood by the literalist, are the ones that declare the visionary's gaze to involve his "not feeling and seeing." What does this statement mean, since, after all, Archetypal Man "sees" himself in his precious palace (the *spatium*) perpetually served (the "fine-structure" of time) by his entourage? The answer is that the experiencer, the Mar-me-can of the allegory, "feels" non-judgmentally, that is, he does not judge what he feels to be pleasant, unpleasant, and/or neutral, and "sees" unseeingly, that is, he does not turn what he sees into manipulatable things. In terms of mentation/mind this coming face to face with one's self describes mind's self-reflexive dynamic. At the danger

[138] This is the *chos-sku*, the *longs-sku*, the *sprul-sku*, the inseparability of these three, and the *ngo-bo-nyid-kyi sku*.

[139] A lucid discussion of this phenomenon, in modern diction spoken of as the fine-structure of time, together with a graphic illustration has been presented by Erich Jantsch, *The Self-organizing Universe*, pp. 232-234.

of being misunderstood, in the gaze by which we come face to face with ourselves, we have become a Self (*bdag*)[140] and, figuratively speaking, have left our petty, fictional ego/self (*nga-bdag*) behind.

While in this coming face to face with one's self the distinction between the hermeneutical gaze (*bltas*) and the apophantic seeing (*mthong*) had been of primary importance, the account of man's growing up by way of allegories, now turns to the distinction between representational thinking, referred to by the term *sems*, and hermeneutical thinking, referred to by the term *ye-shes*. Representational thinking is described by Calvin O. Schrag, who coined this phrase, in the following words:[141]

> Representational thinking picks out those features of world experience which are objectifiable and in some manner lend themselves to quantification and measurement. The mathematical and empirical sciences, although different with respect to methodological orientation, seem to provide relatively clear and distinct examples of the operation of representational thought. Integers, fractions, sets, lines, points, surfaces are mathematical conceptual-objects, amenable to quantification and calculation. Electrons, protons, and DNA are empirical conceptual-objects, constructed in the interest of measurement and control.

He desribes hermeneutical thinking as follows:[142]

> Hermeneutical thinking is *nonobjectifying* thinking. This characterization, however, does not carry the implication that hermeneutical thinking is therefore *subjectivistic*. It is neither subjectifying nor objectifying in character. The subject-object structure of thought is suspended in a drive to grasp the experiencer-figure-ground complex in an *originary presentment* [italics mine].

These two modes of thinking in their intertwining as well as the two modes of the hermeneutical gaze and the apophantic seeing underpin the presentation of the following highly intriguing allegory. It is all the more intriguing and challenging because it introduces a number of intrapsychic

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140 The later literature, starting with Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po (11th century), use the terms *bdag-nyid* and *bdag-nyid-chen-po*. On the problem of the Self, a self that is authentic, its *own self*, in the Western context, see Michael Gelven, *A Commentary on Heidegger's* "Being and Time," p. 66.
The rDzogs-chen thinker's introduction of the idea of a Self (*bdag*) does not contradict the early Buddhists' insistence on a No-self (Pali *anattā*). What they tried to repudiate by this noun was their antagonists' rightly or wrongly interpreted claim of a highly abstract and purely rational *ātman*.

141 *Experience and Being*, p. 112.

142 Ibid.

phenomena, hitherto not mentioned, and because in its often abrupt and cryptic style every word and sentence structure demands careful attention. As far as a translation, in any sense of the word, is possible, this is what the allegory has to say:[143]

> Previously, there lived in the lake by the name Nyi-ma'i spyan ("Whose-eyes-are-the-sun"), (forming) the peak of the axial mountain (of this world system), the Serpent king Nor-bu-'od-ldan ("The Jewel-that-is-the-Sun") by name. He felt bored and, from the peak of the axial mountain, looking up and down, saw a precious residence by the name Nyi-zlas brgyan ("Embellished-with-sun-and-moon") in the rNam-dag padma'i tshal ("Symbolic expression *qua* lotus grove"). Having gone there, he felt happier than he had been in his former residence, and, looking around, in the city rLung-can ("Of-the-nature-of-the-wind"), he saw the minister Kun-byed ("All-busybodying") by name. When he went there, he was offered the position of a minister by (that city's) minister and accepted it. Thus the king assumed the position of a minister. Then the minister-'king' Kun-byed, in the presence of all (present and affirming his) consistency in thinking and speaking, mounted the stallion Myur-byed ("Speed-maker") and rode into the cul-de-sac of 'Gyur-byed ("Change-maker"). There he entered the three gates of disputation and searched for five precious items. Having offered them to the king, the latter became happy and satisfied. Since the dispirited minister-'king' had neglected (making any offerings), the inspirited king-'minister' subjected the minister-'king' to the ordeal by water. When the king and the minister separated, the offerings continued being made with no strife (between the two) and the king was very happy. When the king's realm re-appeared, he again resided in rNam-dag pad-ma'i tshal.

The first thing to note is the emphasis on the sun symbol in the names of both the principal character and the locale from which the events in the al-

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[143] sDe-dge ed., 25: 52ab; Thimphu ed., vol. 5, pp. 488-489. Both editions are highly unsatisfactory. The text, as presented here, is based on a comparative study of both versions.

> *sngon ri-rab-kyi rtse-mo/ rgya-mtsho nyi-ma'i spyan bya-ba-na/ klu'i rgyal-po nor-bu-'od-ldan bya-ba yod skad/ kho skyo-nas ri-rab-kyi rtse-mo-nas/ yar mar bltas-pas/ rnam-dag padma'i tshal bya-ba-na/ rin-po-che khang-pa nyi-zlas brgyan-pa bya-ba mthong skad/ der byon-pas/ sngar-gyi gnas-pas nyams-dga'-nas/ bltas- [52b] pas/ rlung-can-gyi grong-khyer-na/ blon-po kun-byed bya-ba 'dug-pa mthong skad-so// der byon te blon-pos bskos-pa khas-blang skad/ rgyal blon gnas-par khas-blangs skad/ de-nas blon-po kun-byed-kyi rgyal-pos spyan-sngar-nas blo dang gros byas-nas/ myur-byed-kyi rta-pho-la zhon-nas/ 'gyur-byed-kyi 'phrang-la phyin/ rtsod-pa'i sgo gsum-du byon-nas/ rin-po-che sna-lnga btsal/ rgyal-po-la phul-bas/ mnyes-pa dang tshim-pa byung-nas/ blon-po yi-mug rgyal-pos mchod-pa le-lo shor-bas/ rgyal-po thugs-nur-pa'i blon-pos blon-po-la chab-btsal/ rgyal blon bral-bas mchod-pa ma-chag kyang 'thab-zla med-pas shin-tu bde ste/ rgyal-po'i yul rim-par byung-nas/ rnam-dag padma'i tshal-na bzhugs skad-do*

legorical narrative start and become centered in a person's live-body experience. There is the axial mountain of what is considered to be our world system, Mt. Meru and/or Sumeru (*ri-rab*), doubling as this system's axis and the practising experiencer's imaginal spinal cord.[144] The peak of this mountain is a lake (*rgya-mtsho*) that, as its (imaginal) name indicates, is, freely and slightly concretely rendered, the all-seeing sun (*nyi-ma'i spyan*).[145] In this lake there lives, true to the Indian character of serpents (*klu*, Skt. *nāga*) as guardians of subterranean treasures, a serpent king (*klu'i rgyal*) whose name Nor-bu-'od-ldan allows itself to be rendered into English in two ways: (1) a jewel (*nor-bu*) that is endowed with a proto-light (*'od-ldan*), and in view of the fact that '*od-ldan* also means the sun, (2) a jewel (*nor-bu*) that is the sun (*'od-ldan*). In this connection it should be noted that the term *nor-bu* translated as "jewel" hardly ever means a precious stone; rather it refers to an imaginal reality of the highest imaginable value.[146] Though living in the depths of a lake that by being the peak of his and, by implication, our world system's axial mountain provided him with an enormous vista, he, far from being happy, felt bored and made the fatal mistake of getting up from his throne and moving into the dimension he had espied. By this action he forfeited his exalted position as king. True, what he had seen was a precious building (*khang-pa*) enhanced in beauty by its ornamentations that consisted of sun and moon. Going there, he gained a vision of himself as a triune structure consisting of the axial mountain flanked by sun and moon. With this felt vision the allegory leads us into our psychophysical reality as a dynamic system[147] and thus becomes highly relevant for us in our enworldedness. Still, this more or less narrow enworldedness of ours does not mean that we have lost our connectedness with the larger dimension of which it is its closure; rather, we have become oblivious to its presence due to our attention having been drawn elsewhere.

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[144] Its Tibetan term *rtsa* refers to both the intrapsychic, imaginal channels, trajectories, and scaffoldings of this dimension, and to the blood vessels, veins, and nerves in a person's anatomy. See also below note 147.

[145] See also above p. 30 and note 60.

[146] Like the Sanskrit language that differentiates between *maṇi* (jewel) and *ratna* (anything precious), the Tibetan language differentiates between *nor-bu* and *rin-chen*.

[147] From the perspective of our psychophysical reality, the axial mountain-sun-moon triunity, is the triunity of the *rtsa*s (Skt. *nāḍi*): *rtsa dbu-ma* (Skt. *suṣumnā* also known as *avadhūti*) = Mt. Meru/Sumeru (*ri-rab*) in the middle, *ro-ma* (Skt. *rasanā*) = moon (*zla-ba*) to the right, and *rkyang-ma* (*lalanā*) = sun (*nyi-ma*) to the left.

It will be remembered that wholeness tends to close-in onto itself and, in so doing, transforms itself in such a manner that, in mathematical diction, its perfect symmetry (*ka-dag*) undergoes a symmetry transformation that carries with it the original symmetry's symbolic pregnance (*ka-dag*) and is seen and felt as the new dimensionality's symbolic expressiveness (*rnam-dag*). As a dimensionality (*dbyings*) it has two regions of which the one called "lotus-grove" (*padma'i tshal*), intimating the dimensionality's *ex*-tensity, is specifically mentioned. However, since in this "region" the dimensionality's other region, its *in-tensity* that is "of-the-nature-of-happiness" (*bde-ba-can*), is co-present, though unnoticed for reasons stated above, and, in a certain sense, is the former king and now ex-king himself, it should not take us by surprise that this ex-king is said to be very happy.[148] But here the ex-king's curiosity takes a nasty turn. Rather than continuing "gazing around" in what has become his new territory (*yul*), he now "sees" a city (*grong-khyer*) that bears the ominous name "Of-the- nature-of-the-wind" (*rlung-can*). This designation is particularly significant for various reasons. The term *rlung* is basically a concept by intuition and describes the whole range of what we analytically refer to by such concrete expressions as a breeze, a wind, a storm, and such abstract expressions as motility, vibration, and turbulence. In one sense, turbulence is already inherent in the whole's perfect symmetry and effects its symmetry break. In another sense, the *rlung* acts like a carrier wave carrying the whole's *in*-formation about itself along the *rtsa*s,[149] which means that in our psychophysical reality we are not only a structural phenomenon, but also a web of vibrations.

When the king/ex-king ventures into this city he meets, as we would say, its mayor, whom the allegory calls "minister" (*blon-po*). With this titular description a series of confusing name and role changes is introduced. In view of the badly transmitted versions of this allegory, it is safe to assume that the copyist/editor did quite a lot to complicate matters. There is, first of all the name of this so-called minister. In one version he is called Kun-byed ("All-busybodying"), which would fit in with the name of the city as an ever-blowing wind, but would not do justice to the highly esteemed Tantra by the name of *kun-byed rgyal-po* "The king who is all-acting," though not in the sense of being a creator as postulated by the diverse theistic belief systems. In another version he is called rKun-byed ("Perpetra-

[148] See also above pp. 55-56 for this symmetry-breaking in another locale.

[149] See p. 64 note 147.

tor of Thefts”). This would fit in with the triadic assessment of the individual’s psyche as being made up of the organizing principle, mentality (*sems*) as the king, the egological and egocentric mind (*yid*) as the minister (who in his eagerness to usurp and sometimes wielding the power that does not belong to him is just a common thief), and the sensory perceptions (*rnam-shes*) as the populace, the “working class” in modern political diction.

With the arrival of the king/ex-king in the city of winds with its mayor/minister the scenario for changing roles is provided. The mayor/minister assumes the role of a king and offers the immigrant king/ex-king the position of a minister which is willingly accepted. We now have a minister-‘king’ Kun-byed or rKun-byed by name and a king/ex-king-‘minister’ whose name, though not mentioned, is Nor-bu-’od-ldan, mentioned at the beginning of the allegory. Somehow, despite his assumed role as the king, the minister-‘king’ Kun-byed/rKun-byed cannot really change his character and position that is subordinate to the king, even if he has turned ex-king-‘minister.’ So, in order to show his loyalty, that is, his steadfastness and consistency in thinking and speaking, he mounts his stallion Myur-byed (“Speed-maker”) whose very name is a poetic expression for “wind,” and rides forth on state business. In his hurry he happens to ride along a narrow trail that turns into a cul-de-sac (*'phrang*). Actually, three cul-de-sacs are intended and they all end at an impenetrable fortress (*rdzong*), a dead end in the strict sense of the word. The name of this triple cul-de-sac/fortress, 'Gyur-byed (“Change-maker”), tells quite a lot. On one hand, it contrasts with the steadfastness and consistency in thinking and speaking of the anthropomorphically imaged organizing principle, on the other hand, it implies the unreliability of all so-called final answers in any of the figments of the egological mind to which we like to cling. Assessed from the practical side this situation is tersely summed up by Padmasambhava in the following words:[150]

> The fortress of the Developing Phase (*bskyed-rim*) and the narrow trail
> to it,

[150] *sKu-gsung-thugs-rdo-rje rtsa-ba thams-cad rdzogs-pa’i rgyud*, 25: 68b:

bskyed-pa'i rdzong dang bskyed-pa'i 'phrang
rdzogs-pa'i rdzong dang rdzogs-pa'i 'phrang
rdzogs-chen rdzong dang rdzogs-chen 'phrang
yo-ga gsum-du rig-par bya
bde-gshegs-snying-po sems-nyid-do

The fortress of the Completion Phase (*rdzogs-rim*) and the narrow trail to it, (and)
The fortress of the Ultimate Completeness Phase (*rdzogs-chen*) and the narrow trail to it
Are to be known [ek-statically] as three forms of *yoga* (techniques).
(Ultimately they are the expression of) the core intensity in (the experiencer's) move into blissfulness, thinking's thinking.

It would far exceed the scope of the present allegory's elucidation to go into the details of the above quotation. Suffice it to point out that in rDzogs-chen thought the Indian word *yoga* in its Tibetan rendering as *rnal-'byor* (used in the stanza preceding this one) is hermeneutically interpreted as a process by which the experiencer/practitioner links himself backward (*'byor*) to Being's still-point (*rnal/rnal-ma*) as a starting-point for a fresh vision of himself and his world.

In the allegory's continuation of the impetuous rider's entering the "three gates of disputation" this statement is to highlight his getting in and coming out ("the gates") of his immersion and involvement in his body, speech, and mind. Each of these features of his concrete existence are a source of strife, most conspicuous when it comes to so-called logical disputations in which pugilism, raucousness, and insinuations were not uncommon ingredients. In all this commotion and dead end situations he looks for what might be precious. Eventually he finds five precious items and on his return offers them to the king who is naturally very pleased. So far, so good. But who is the king? Was he the ex-king turned king-'minister' of the self-styled minister-'king'? The text itself does not say anything. However, it is not unlikely that the author of this allegory, Vimalamitra, at this point reverts to the traditional idea of a king being superior to a minister, and lets the change of roles end here. One interesting point that emphasizes the positive character of rDzogs-chen thought and somehow foreshadows what is going to happen, is the rather laconic statement that Kun-byed/rKun-byed not only searches but also finds something precious and valuable in an otherwise dismal situation. This poses the question of what are the five precious items to which the text refers? The answer, reflecting a long-standing tradition of intuitive-hermeneutical thinking, is given by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa Dri-med-'od-zer (1308-1364) who declares:[151]

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[151] *gSang-snying'grel-pa phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, fol. 167b:

yul lnga dag-pa yon-tan lnga'i rang-bzhin gser dngul byu-ru mu-tig nor-bu ste rin-chen lnga

> The five sensory fields in their symbolic expressiveness are each the five capabilities' eigenbeing: gold, silver, coral, pearl, and jewel.

The context in which this statement occurs is the construction of a maṇḍala (*dkyil-'khor*) that doubles as (1) a vision of one's self in its symbolic complexity and as (2) this re-envisioned self's palatial residence (*gzhal-yas-khang*). The reference to *a* or *the* jewel, however, is rather intriguing, since usually by this term the Wish-granting Jewel (*yid-bzhin nor-bu*, Skt. *cintāmaṇi*) is understood. Whatever the case may be nowadays, as *nor-bu rin-po-che* it was conceived of as forming a pentad, having both an internal and an arcane significance, and being closely related to the coming face to face with one's self (*ngo-sprod*).[152]

The allegory that so far has dealt with one's becoming ever more deeply involved and engrossed in one's enworldedness, now turns to one's extricating oneself out of it and returning to one's "real" home from which one had strayed in a moment of a self-induced distraction. It is here that the allegory becomes very dramatic. The two dramatis personae are contrastingly and almost tangibly described. The minister-'king' is dispirited, dejected, downhearted (*yi-mug/yid-mug*), the king-'minister' is inspirited, aroused, elated (*thugs-snur*).[153] The contrasting terms *yid* and *thugs* as well as *mug* and *snur* are highly revealing: *yid* intimates what we would call the "egological mind," and *thugs* intimates what we would call "spirit" and/or the "spiritual/spirituality" (*Geist* and/or *das Geistige*). Similarly, *mug* denotes an increasing darkness and with it a sense of despondency and hopelessness, while *snur* denotes a movement up and ahead. Certainly, spirit and/or the spiritual that is the hallmark of the king-'minister' is not a thing and hence is not subject to any kind of deterioration. As the allegory so aptly expresses it, the minister-'king' in the hybris of his egocentricity runs up to what is a dead end and has to return dejectedly to where he came from without deriving any benefit from what he has found. Part of his predicament is also his having neglected to make what is referred to as "offerings" (*mchod-pa*). By contrast, the king-'minister" is not at all negligent in making "offerings." What are these offerings? The allegory itself is silent, but from other texts we learn that they comprise all of what we subsume under such labels as ceremonies, rituals, celebrations, liturgies and so

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152 See the *Nor-bu rin-po-che'i rgyud*, (Taipei ed., volume 55, p. 403 column 1 to p. 405 column 1).

153 The printed *thugs-nur* is one of the many wrong spellings that mar both editions.

on, but from a dynamic perspective that reflects the agent's character of being himself a triune process pattern described in terms of the external, the internal, and the arcane.[154] Each of these three levels is attractive in the sense that the experiencer may "get stuck" with any one of them, which means that he is dragged deeper and deeper into his already limited and murky niche of self-obscuration and in his egocentricity (*yid*) is unable to see anything. Since this goes against Life (not in the sense of its misplaced concreteness as some life force) and its Light (not in the sense of some particle or wave, but in the sense of an experience of being fully "alive" and "alight"), a transition from the reductionist's mode of re-presentational thinking and apophantic seeing to the visionary's hermeneutical mode of thinking and circumspective gazing is called for. To effect this transition is not an easy task. As a matter of fact, to wean a person from his preconceptions and convictions that may have been helpful in conducting his life within his ego's small-scale world, and to "convert" him to some wider issues with their vested interest and, thereby, to subject him to some ideology or belief system claimed to "save" him, usually leaves that person more narrow-minded and, as the case may be, more fanatical than before. Stated differently, such a person has but succumbed to another form of self-deception.

The allegory is well aware of what is at stake in effecting this transition. It lets the king make the minister undergo an "ordeal by water" (*chab-bstsal*).[155] Legally speaking, it may have been a rehabilitation process by which a "culprit" (the Kun-byed/rKun-byed in the present situation) was given the chance of mending his ways by cleansing himself of his iniquities. Anyhow, with the once ex-king-'minister' now being again a king in his own right, his former realm reappears and he takes up his residence in it.

Within the co-existence and co-emergence of the two modes of a pre-eminently visual thinking, be this of a self-narrowing (*sems*) or a self-expanding (*ye-shes*) variety, the one becoming increasingly shallow and, like driftwood, floating on the surface of a river with no known beginning and

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[154] An important text that would deserve an in-depth study is the *rDo-rje yang-tog-gi snying-po'i rgyud* by or ascribed to Padmasambhava. See the Taipei edition of the Tibetan Tripitaka, vol. 55, pp. 505 column 1 to p. 508 column 8, specifically p. 506 columns 5-6.

[155] This word is not found in any of the available dictionaries and even what it means is no longer understood. My rendering of this expression is based on the context in which it occurs later in this text.

no foreseeable ending, the other delving deeper and trying to get to the "bottom of things" (*ye*),[156] it is the latter that has been most highly valued by the rDzogs-chen thinkers. This valuation is less a statement of fact than a task to develop this capacity of ours. In other words, we must experience, that is, sense and feel what it means to see and to think. This "taking things to heart" (*nyams-su len-pa*) is the subject matter of the immediately following allegory that because of its compactness is exceedingly difficult to translate. It has this to say:[157]

> Formerly, in a precious immeasurably vast mansion (inside) a hollow area in (our world system's) axial mountain (*ri-rab*), in the *rTsub-'gyur-gyi tshal* (close to) the *sMe-sha'i grong-khyer*, there lived the king *Kun-snang*. He slammed the door of his palace shut and seated himself on his throne. By the force of his slamming the palace door shut, the minister was held imprisoned and the populace that was of the nature of the subject-object structure (*bya-byed-can*) was held in check (by the king as its guiding principle). Later the minister was banished. When the populace had been revived, though remaining alone, the king was not bored at all.

In this "taking things to heart" and preserving the light that, quite literally, "lights up" in this moment of being in closest contact with what is seen and felt, the key element is the "subject" before it becomes *a* subject and loses its *Lichthaftigkeit*. The allegory speaks of this subject as the king and gives him the name "he who lights up holistically" (*kun-snang*). This name itself is a descriptor of an experience that, in rDzogs-chen diction, is the second phase space in a three-phase in-depth appraisal (*ting-nge-'dzin*), a listening to Being's calling and heeding what it promises. Though having strong visual connotations, as its relationship with a total lighting-up (*kun-*

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[156] The Tibetan term *ye* no longer used independently, is, according to our Aristotelian categories, a noun, referring to the "primordial ground," in Martin Heidegger's terminology, the *Dasein* that stands out in the openness of Being in its becoming the radiance of our own most unique ability-to-be. In rDzogs-chen diction: *ngo-bo/stong* -> *rang-bzhin/gsal*. In its inherent creativity it prefigures the reciprocal and intertwining presence of the "subject" of the visionary experience and the "object" of its beholding.

[157] Loc. cit., 25: 52b; Thimphu ed., vol. 5, p. 489. The text given here more or less follows the Thimphu version that once in a while (with exceptions) is superior to the sDe-dge version:

> *sngon yul sme-sha'i grong-khyer-du rtsub-'gyur-gyi tshal-du/ ri-rab-kyi khong-seng rin-po-che'i gzhal-med-khang-na/ rgyal-po kun-snang bya-ba yod-pas/ pho-brang-gi sgo bcad-de gdan-la bzhugs-pas/ sgo bcad-pa'i stobs-kyis blon-po btson-du zin skad/ dmangs bya-byed-can cham-la phebs skad/ phyis blon-po mthar spyugs skad/ dmangs tshe-la gsal-nas gcig-pu bzhugs kyang skyo-ba med skad*

snang/kun-tu snang-ba) intimates, this "taking to heart" is primarily concerned with feeling (*nyams*) as a deep source of an understanding that is sharper and clearer than what the notions we produce by the exercise of mere intellection, can ever provide.

The impact of this "heart-felt" experience is so strong that its experiencer feels himself transported, transformed and transfixed in a locale that, though within the deepest recesses of (his world-system's) axial mountain (that is us from an anthropocosmic perspective), is at the top of it and yet close to the ordinary world deep below. What are we to make of this paradox? The very names of these two localities in the experiencer's sojourning, tell us quite a lot. There is the one called *rTsub-'gyur-gyi tshal* and the other called *sMe-sha'i grong-khyer*. The name of the first one means a "garden," a "park," a "grove" (*tshal*) and its description suggests it to be a place where a person becomes paralysed (*rtsub*) (with awe and wonder) and undergoes a change (*'gyur*) (in character) when he sees the paradisaic beauty of this highest level of the axial mountain with its pond surrounded by lush trees. The name of the second one means a "settlement," a "city" (*grong-khyer*) where persons afflicted with a contagious disease, notably, leprosy, lived.[158] In this contrast between a garden of exquisite beauty inclusive of the whole's lighting-up and a settlement in which the light has gone out or, at best, is scattered so as to be hardly recognizable, we can easily detect Vimalamitra's acquaintance with and indebtedness to Zoroastrianism and Gnosticism,[159] Nestorianism and Manichaeism[160] — ugly words that like all other "-isms" denigrate what they had and attempted to offer and convey.

What about the king's "slamming the door shut" (to his private residence), resulting, if this is the right word, in his minister's "imprisonment" and his populace being "put down"? Does this imply what in psychiatry is called autism, an abnormal withdrawal from reality? Certainly not. Vima-

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158 In modern Tibetan the word *sme-sha-*(*can*) means a person who has a mole on his body and, in its extended use, a person of a low caste in India and a blacksmith or butcher in Tibet. In the *dPal Khrag-'thung gal-po*, 19: 180b, the word occurs in conjunction with the expression *rigs-ngan* meaning any person of low extraction.

159 For details see Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis – The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, pp. 282-283.

160 From among the many works about these two movements, an excellent overview of them and their ultimate eclipse is given by Richard C. Foltz, *Religions on the Silk Road*, pp. 61-88.

lamitra's words must be understood as a process in the context of this "taking to heart," in which the king, far from being an entity in misplaced concreteness, but rather a symbol of the whole's lighting-up (*snang*) and its supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig*), preserves by taking up (*len*) and maintaining the integrity of the felt (*nyams*) vision. This maintaining implies its guarding itself against intrusions by forces that would interfere with the task of growing up and transcending oneself. These forces are, in Vimalamitra's words, the minister, symbol of the egological mind, and the populace, symbol of the interplay between subject and object,[161] used and misused by the minister for his petty egocentric schemes.

While this image of a king seating himself and being seated on his throne, his minister being sent to prison, and the populace being put down, seems to have been the most widely accepted one, the allegory adds a different story that reflects the syncretism prevailing at Vimalamitra's time. This is the story of the minister being banished and the populace given a new lease on life. The minister's banishment resembles the postbiblical Jewish, Christian, and Muslim legends concerning the rebellion of Lucifer/Satan/Iblis against God and their expulsion from heaven, too closely as to be ignored. So also Vimalamitra's statement that the populace is given a new lease on life is to be understood as a deautomatization of the perceptual process and the restoration of its radiance to its genuine brilliance. In the words of David Michael Levin:[162]

> The radiance of things reflects, and is simultaneously reflected by, the 'equivalent' radiance of the gaze. As it alights and lights things up, the gaze itself lights up in its delight. The two, the seer and the seen, are thus gathered together in an *ecstasy* of light.

There is a subtle difference between the king's seating himself on his throne and his being firmly seated on it. It is the latter phase that is dealt with in the immediately following allegory. In it we are told:[163]

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161 Vimalamitra's diction is unusual. Instead of the traditional *gzung-'dzin*, he uses the compound *bya-byed* meaning "that-which-is-to-be-done and the doing-(it)." In the compound *gzung-'dzin* that literally means "that-which-is-to-be-grasped/apprehended and the grasping/apprehending-(it)," the *gzung* has the added connotation of the object soliciting the subject to grasp/apprehend (German *begreifen* meaning both "to understand (conceptually)" and to "handle").

162 *The Opening of Vision,* pp. 394-395.

163 Loc.cit., (consolidated):

> Previously, inside a hollow area in (our world system's) axial mountain there existed a retreat (*sgom-khang*), embellished by sun and moon. After having been lifted upward by (its inherently pervasive) vibrancy it moved all-pervasively. Inside this retreat there sat a hermit (*sgom-chen*), utterly immobile. Whatever clamor and tumult there might arise, he would, even if summoned, abide, not moving from his (ecstatic) intentionality.

From a purely literary point of view the locale's description looks like a condensed recapitulation of what had been said in the two preceding allegories. However, the locale's designation as a retreat (*sgom-khang*) and its occupant as a hermit (*sgom-chen*) are utterly new developments that allow themselves to be seen either as Being's further closure onto itself or as a symmetry transformation, technically known as a dilation (change of scale by any amount). After all, as the "retreat's" description of "being embellished by sun and moon," intimates, it is a scaled-down version of the original locale. Again, its scaled- down version must not be understood in any static sense. The text makes this abundantly clear by speaking of it as being "constituted," if I may be permitted to use this expression, by a vibrancy that lifts it upward (*'phen-par byed-pa'i rlung*). This particular vibrancy (*rlung*) is one in a pentad of vibrancies (involving, among other functions, what we would call vitality, metabolism, and so on), that is itself all-pervasive and lets the locale "move all-pervasively" (*kun-tu 'gro*). Now, this moving all-pervasively is, linguistically speaking, a poetic expression for the "sky" (*nam-mkha'*), but, since in the context of Vimalamitra's presentation we move in the dimension of experience-as-lived (spoken of by way of allegories in order to preserve its live character) it expresses Being's openness in the felt sense of a being-open-to-itself-in-its-beingness. In mathematical diction this "moving all-pervasively" is, with respect to the scaled-down symmetry transformation, an approximate perfect symmetry.

No less challenging is the reference to the occupant of this thoroughly dynamic locale as a hermit (*sgom-chen*). Even before the contemporary (20th and 21st centuries) context, the term *sgom-chen* was a honorific and/or

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sngon ri-rab-kyi khong-seng-na/ nyi-zla mdzes-pa'i sgom-khang gcig yod skad/ de 'phen-par byed-pa'i rlung-gis bteg-nas kun-tu 'gro skad/ de'i nang-na sgom-chen kun-tu mi-g.yo-ba gcig bshugs skad-do// ji-tsam-du 'du-'dzi dang g.yeng-ba byung kyang/ khong dgongs-pa-las bkugs kyang mi-'gro-bar gnas skad

contemptuous term for certain religious fanatics best avoided.[164] Of course, much depends on how to understand what is meant by *sgom*. One thing is certain about its meaning. It is closely related to what was understood by "vision" (*lta-ba*) as a "seeing" rather than as having an opinion, and its function was to develop the vision by bringing out its potential, not to make of it a fixation, euphemistically called meditation and turning it into some sort of show business in the present age of global commercialism. Such misunderstanding is easily accounted for when the descriptor "utterly immobile" (*mi-g.yo-ba*)[165] is taken literally and its qualification as "(ecstatic) intentionality" (*dgongs*) is ignored. I have added the adjective "ecstatic" in parentheses in order to emphasize the intrinsic meaning of *dgongs* that by and large corresponds to Martin Heidegger's explication of the word "intentionality":[166]

> Intentionality is neither objective nor subjective in the usual sense, although it is certainly both, but in a much more original sense, since intentionality, belonging to the Dasein's existence, makes it possible that this being, the Dasein, comports existingly toward the extant. With an adequate interpretation of intentionality, the traditional concept of the subject and of subjectivity becomes questionable. Not only does what psychology means by the subject become questionable but also what psychology itself as a positive science must presuppose implicitly about the idea and constitution of the subject and what philosophy itself has hitherto defined ontologically in an utterly deficient way and left in the dark. The traditional philosophical concept of the subject has also been inadequately determined with regard to the basic constitution of intentionality. We cannot decide anything about intentionality starting from the concept of the subject because intentionality is the essential though not the most original structure of the subject itself.

The Tibetan term occurs in two compounds: *sangs-rgyas dgongs-pa* and *thugs dgongs-pa*. The first compound means "the intentionality (as which) the dissipation (of darkness) and the spreading (of light) (expresses itself)" and may be said to reflect the strictly Indian background. The second compound means "the intentionality (as which) Spirit (expresses itself)" and may be said to reflect the Gnostic background as proffered in the *Apocry-*

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[164] A scathing critique is given by Saraha (exact date unknown, but certainly about or before the 10th century) in his *Dohākośagīti*. For a full and annotated translation of Saraha's *Songs*, see Herbert Guenther, *Ecstatic Spontaneity.*

[165] In the Thimphu edition, this expression is understood as the hermit's name.

[166] *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* p. 65.

phon of John.[167] Both intentionalities in all their nuances have been discussed at length by Padmasambhava.[168] In passing it may be pointed out that the retreat's occupant in his immobility is found almost verbatim in Vimalamitra's account of the enigmatic dGa'-rab-rdo-rje/Jesus personality as preserved by Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa Dri-med-'od-zer.[169]

The occurrence of the term *thugs* "spirit/spirituality" in connection with the Dasein's intentionality points to some corporeally imaged agent or human figure (*sku*) who presents and expresses it in what is still an imaginal dimension. This is the subject matter of the immediately following allegory. It tells us:[170]

> Previously, in a mansion made from precious (substances), there stayed Archetypal Man (*khye'u*), Nam-mkha'i snying-po (by name). When in the mansion's skylight the inner glow of his face had arisen, his existent mansion became nonexistent. Rather than running anywhere (in search of his) mansion that had disappeared, he stood (where) he was as his legitimate dwelling.

Several points in this terse statement need clarification. There is, as is usual in accounts of space-time dimensions, a reference to a locale, a mansion that is made of precious substances. Though not mentioned which they are, it is safe to assume that they all have a luminous quality and give the mansion, in the narrower sense of the word, a living room, a distinct character befitting its occupant, Nam-mkha'i snying-po "Space-*spatium*'s core-intensity." The bearer of this "name" that already intimates the occupant's transcending the luminous limits set by his luminous mansion, is Archetypal Man (*khye'u*), himself even more so being of the nature of light, the *Lichtmensch*, calling to mind the gnostic idea of the "Light-Adam."[171] In what follows in the above allegory there is, on the one hand, the reference to the mansion's skylight through which light enters a room and through which a glimpse of light beyond the room is gained. On the other hand,

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[167] See Giovanni Filoramo, *History of Gnosticism*, pp. 60-61.

[168] *Nyi-zla'i snying-po'od-'bar-ba bdud-rtsi rgya-mtsho'khyil-ba,* 3: 29b-30b.

[169] *Bi-ma snying-tig,* part 3, columns 1-179.

[170] Loc.cit. (sDe-dge ed., 25: 52b-53a; Thimphu ed. vol. 5, pp. 489-490):

> *sngon [53a] rin-po-che-las byas-pa'i khang-pa gcig-na/ khye'u nam-mkha'i snying-po bya-ba 'dug-pas/ khang-pa'i mthongs-na/ sgo-na kho-yi byad-kyi mdangs shar-nas/ kho-la khang-pa yod med-par 'dug-la/ khang-pa zhig-pas kyang gar yang ma-bros-par rang-sa de-na 'dug skad-do*

[171] Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis*, p. 76.

there is a reference to the "inner glow of [Archetypal Man's] face" (*byad-kyi mdangs*). Now, it is interesting to note that in all available dictionaries (as far as they list this expression) its meaning is given as "brightness," "radiancy," "beautiful complexion" and any reference to a "face" (*byad*) is absent. Yet, Vimalamitra's diction not only reveals his closeness to gnostic circles, but also his indebtedness to their ideas which he molded in the light of his process-oriented thinking, in particular, to the *Apocryphon of John* where the following words are highly significant:[172]

> He knew his own image when he saw it in the pure water of light which surrounded him. And his thought (*ennoia*) accomplished a work, it revealed itself. It stood before him out of the glory of the light: this is the power which is before the all, which revealed itself, the perfect providence (*pronoia*) of the all, the light, the likeness of the light, the image of the invisible. She is the perfect power Barbēlo, the perfect aeon of glory… She is the first thought (*ennoia*), his (the Father's) image. She became a first "man", which is the virgin spirit (*pneuma*)…

Leaving aside the sexist (male dominance) character of this gnostic text, another statement in the allegory that may be said to be "gnostic" in character is the assertion that, when with Archetypal Man's passing through his mansion's skylight, his former dwelling collapes and, when instead of looking and hunting nostalgically for it, he takes up his residence in what is his legitimate dwelling (*rang-sa*). In Gnosticism proper, this movement involves two aspects: an *epignōsis*, a remembering of one's own celestial home, and an *anachōrēsis,* a return to one's own origins. As Giovanni Filoramo succinctly remarks:[173]

> The vision of the Gnostic pantheon thus has a decisive effect: how Hermes, Allogenes, knowing his true ego, becomes the reality that he sees, because he actually is that reality.

But while Gnosticism is essentially a static world-view with a Supreme Triad (the Father, Spirit, and Son) at the top, Vimalamitra, in the colophon to this allegory, conceives of the *chos-sku*, one's corporeally felt and imaged Self as meaning through and through (*chos*), to be such that when one comes up to it as some *thing*, it gives way and one can pass right through it (*zang-thal*) without "getting stuck."

In whichever manner this "coming home," this "taking up one's legitimate dwelling" (*rang-sa*) and this "coming face-to-face with one's self,"

[172] Quotations from Kurt Rudolph, loc.cit., p. 77.

[173] *A History of Gnosticism,* p. 58.

this “coming to know what one actually and really is” (*ngo-sprod*) may be spoken of, even if because of its value and valuableness we cannot do otherwise than resorting to positive notions and concepts, we just remain shackled by them, unable to open ourselves up to a broader dimension of which we are but a tiny fraction, a down-sized symmetry transformation, and start expanding our horizon. This is what, according to Vimalamitra’s colophon, the following allegory attempts to impress on us by saying:[174]

> Previously, king gSal-rgyal of Kosala had put on his pure-bred magical horse a golden tether, but was completely at a loss (how and where) to ride.

In this thoroughly “Indian-Buddhist” allegory three points should be noted. The one is the hybrid formula “king gSal-rgyal of Kosala” in which the locale, Kosala, is given in its original Sanskrit-Pali form, while the name of its ruler, Prasenajit, has been rendered into Tibetan as *gsal* (“radiant”) *rgyal* (“victorious”) in conformity with the Tibetan’s ethnocentricity that demanded that all non-Tibetan words be “translated” into Tibetan. Obviously, the translator was at a loss of what to do with the word Kosala, while he had no difficulty rendering Vaiśālī into *yangs-pa-can*. Both places played a significant role in the historical Buddha’s moving from place to place.[175] The second point is the reference to the “pure-bred magical horse.” A “pure-bred” (*gyi-ling*) or “superior” (*mchog*) horse is one of a king’s cherished treasures, but its qualification in this allegory as “magical” (*'phrul*) points to its luminous character as a phasm. The third point is the “golden tether” by which, according to Vimalamitra’s colophon, the baggage of propositional-representational thinking is to be understood. In other words, all that does not reach up to thinking experientially[176] is a tether, regardless of whether it is made of gold or hemp. Over and again in

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[174] Loc. cit.:

> *sngon ko-sa-la'i rgyal-po gsal-rgyal-gyis/ gyi-ling 'phrul-gyi rta-la/ gser-gyi sgrog gcig bcug-nas/ tshar-gyis 'gro ma-shes-par 'dug skad*

[175] A still valuable and readable account of the importance of these localities and the dirty politics prevailing at that time is given by H. Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism,* pp. 38-40.

[176] “Thinking experientially” begins with what is referred to by the term Yoga, one of the most overworked words in academic and counter-cultural circles. In its Tibetan rendering as *rnal-'byor* it means a linking oneself with one’s inner stillness and the implication is that we are always endowed with, and already predisposed by and to an attunement to Being. Its rudimentary presence is intimated by the so-called Anuyoga, elaborated by the so-called Mahāyoga, and climaxing in the so-called Atiyoga.

works by rDzogs-chen thinkers we are told: "it does not matter whether one is fettered by a chain of gold or by a rope of hemp, one is just as fettered," and "it does not matter whether the sun is obscured by a white cloud or a dark one, the sun is just as prevented from spreading its light."

No amount of propositional-represention thinking, because of its closedness, can ever effect experiential thinking in its opening and openness. Rather our "felt sense" of being attuned to Being and our heeding this attunement by letting it reign "freely" without interfering with it, will effect this opening of itself to itself. The immediately following allegory puts it this way:[177]

> Previously, the crystal *Lichtmensch* Kun-tu-gsal ("All through radiating") did not know [that what was] lighting-up [was] his own face. He tied to his pure-bred magical stallion a snake and a camel. He [then] knew [that what was] lighting-up [was] his own face. [Since] there was no need to untie [what had seemed to fetter him] he went into (Being's) auto-untying.

In this allegory emphasis is on light in its manifestation, its lighting-up in the shape of archetypal Man whose luminescence and luminosity is underlined by his qualification as a crystal, clear and translucent, and by his bearing the descriptive name Kun-tu-gsal-(ba) that is related to the descriptive term Kun-tu-snang-ba. Both descriptors intimate that light is an emergent phenomenon in the sense that Kun-tu-snang-ba refers to a "coming-to-light" (*snang-ba*) and Kun-tu-gsal-(ba) to this emergent light's "radiating" (*gsal-ba*).[178] Notwithstanding his thoroughly luminous character this crystal-clear and crystal-like *Lichtmensch* is unaware of what he really is. Because of his sovereign standing[179] he may have a pure-bred magical horse that might carry him to his self-realization, but he has not yet come

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[177] Loc. cit.:

> *sngon shel-gyi khye'u kun-tu-gsal-gyis/ rang-gi byad-kyi snang-ba ma-shes-par/ gyi-ling 'phrul-gyi rta-pho-la/ sbrul dang rnga-mong-gis gdams-pas/ rang-gi byad-kyi rnam-par shes-pas/ dgrol mi-dgos-par rang-grol-du song skad*

[178] Its emergent character is vouchsafed by the fact that it is the second phase space in what is technically referred to by the term *ting-nge-'dzin* that I render as "in-depth appraisal." The deeper meaning is a holding to Being's calling to which we as its experiencers are beholden.

[179] In a certain sense the images of the king (*rgyal-po*) and the *Lichtmensch* (*khye'u*) point to the same reality. The image of the king emphasizes the psychosocial organization of the experiencer's imaginal dimension, the image of the *Lichtmensch* emphasizes the organizing principle's luminous experience.

face-to-face with his own face (*ngo-sprod*) as the decisive phase in his self-cognition. Though having been there as a latent potentiality it cannot be forced to become a reality, rather it emerges from the dynamic wholeness that the experiencer still is, by way of a process that unfolds by itself and is likened to a snake uncoiling itself by itself, of its own accord.[180]

While the image of the snake uncoiling itself is doubtlessly of Indian provenance, the image of the camel points to Central Asia and the Silk Road along which Buddhism, like its precursor, Nestorianism, and its contemporary, Manichaeism, spread as far as China. The intriguing point is the triad of animals: the horse as the "carrier" of the organizing principle, imaged as a king or a *Lichtmensch*, flanked, as it were, by a snake that by its uncoiling intimates the system's – (there is nothing that cannot be seen as a system) — pent-up energy disengaging itself from its impediment, and by a camel that by its ability to cover up its nostrils with its lower lip and thereby protecting itself against the sandstorms in the deserts it traverses, intimates the system's safeguard against an intrusion by any impediments. Just as one cannot force a snake to uncoil, so also one cannot force a camel to cover its nostrils. In view of the fact that rDzogs-chen thinking is process-oriented and experience-based in the sense that it not only distinguishes between experience-*qua*-experience and experience-as-expressed, but also, in whichever way we may refer to it, involves spirit-mentation as a dynamic principle, we, as embodied beings, can conceive of this triad of animals as its self-expression or self-presentation and speak of it as our organismic mentation or organismic mind,[181] located, as it were, at the lowest level of our triune hierarchical organization. At its highest level, whether spoken of as the king (*rgyal-po*) or the *Lichtmensch* (*khye'u*), this spirit-mentation becomes self-referential, self-reflexive, and self-cognitive. This leads to the last statement in the above allegory, the "by itself" (*rang*).

There are two terms that express this "self-" (*rang*). The one is *rang-rig* "self-cognition," "self-cognitive," "self-cognizing," emphasizing the supraconscious ecstatic intensity that, paradoxically is both the climax and the

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[180] This image calls to mind the Brahmanical idea of the *kundalinī-śakti* . For details see Georg Feuerstein, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of YOGA*, s.v. The difference between the Buddhist and Brahmanical interpretations is the fact that the Buddhist one is purely psychological-imaginal, while the Brahmanical one is physiological-psychological.

[181] I have borrowed these terms from Erich Jantsch, *The Self-organizing Universe,* pp. 163 and passim.

starting of the unfolding process. The other, used in this allegory, is *rang-grol*. Strictly speaking, our language using verbs that are either transitive or intransitive, cannot do justice to the verbal character of the morpheme *grol* that is neither transitive (*sgrol*) nor intransitive (*'grol*), but carries with it the dynamic connotation of how it feels when one "stands free" of everything, summed up by the rDzogs-chen thinkers in the suffocating notion of an ego/self (*nga/bdag*). In this connection attention should be drawn to the static character of our phrase "standing free" that cannot go beyond its egological and egocentric framework.

The concluding allegories are devoted to highlighting the uniqueness and richness of the visionary experience of the whole's luminous and blazing character (*Lichthaftigkeit*) as it pervades and transfigures everything in its orbit. It is not without significance that the first allegory leads us back to our original situatedness (*Befindlichkeit*) as the first symmetry break in the perfect symmetry, the untarnished blissfulness that in its further unfolding lets us experience the lost uniqueness of our being as a challenge to regain and transcend it. This is how the following allegory describes this going down and astray and coming up again and standing free in a new dynamic régime:[182]

> Previously, in the country Yangs-pa-chen-po,[183] in the city Padmo-bde-gsal ("Padma-happiness-radiance")[184] the king Nor-bu-'od-ldan ("The Jewel-that-is-the-Sun ") by name had a precious jewel box that was brimful with smaller gems surpassing one's imagination. When

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182 Loc.cit., fols. 53a-b; Thimphu ed., vol. 5, p. 490-492:

> *sngon yul yangs-pa-chen-po/ padmo-bde-gsal-gyi grong-khyer-na/ rgyal-po nor-bu-'od-ldan bya-ba-la/ nor-bu rin-po-che'i za-ma-tog gcig yod skad/ de-yi nang-na rin-po-che phra-mo bsam-gyis mi-khyab-pa-yis bkang-ba gcig yod skad/ de-nas rgyal-po zhabs-'chag-tu byon-pas/ rgan-mo ling-tog-can bya-ba dang phrad-nas smras-pa/ de-yi bar-du rkun-mo mi-lngas za-ma-tog khyer te/ sme-sha'i grong-khyer drug-tu mun-pa'i mi-drug-gis/ nor-bu-la bkur-sti la-sogs byas-pas/ nor-bu-las dgos-'dod [491] ma byung skad/ mun-pa'i mi-drug kyang yid-byung skad/ phyis khye'u snang-ba bsam-gyis mi-khyab-pa bya-ba'i sdam-po mi-gcig byung skad/ rgan-mo mu-lto-mar rig/ sngon ji-ltar brkus-pa'i lo-rgyus brjod-pas/ rgyal-po thugs nur skad nas rgan-mo-la chab-bstsal/ rkun-mo bran-du bcad/ mun-pa'i mi-drug kyang bsad/ sme-sha'i grong-khyer-[53b] drug bcom/ rgyal-po dang nor-bu za-ma-tog kyang phrad/ dang-po'i rang-yul zin skad-do*

183 Except for the addition of the adjective *chen-po* "great," "vast," this country's name is the same as the one given in p. 30 note 59.

184 This is the city's name as given in the Thimphu edition; the sDe-dge edition gives it as *padmo-bde-rtsal* ("Padma-happiness-inner dynamic/gracefulness"), where *rtsal* is obviously a spelling mistake for *tshal* "forest grove." See above p. 37 note 81.

> this king was taking a stroll, he met an old woman Ling-tog-can ("She who is of the nature of a cataract") and started a conversation. Meanwhile five female thieves carried off the jewel box. (Though) six men of darkness in the six settlements of the outcasts paid their respect to and venerated the jewel, they did not get what they wanted from the jewel and so the six men of darkness became very depressed. Some time afterwards there came a stalwart person Khye'u snang-ba bsam-gyis-mi-khyab-pa ("Archetypal Man whose lighting-up was inconceivably bright)." He recognized the old beggar woman. After he told the king how previously she had stolen (his jewel), the king became happy and content. He submitted the old woman to the ordeal by water, made the (five) female thieves his servants, and killed the six men of darkness for good measure. He demolished the six settlements of the outcasts. Having retrieved his precious jewel box, the king returned to his primordially legitimate country.

The theme of this allegory is self-explanatory. The king, symbol of the principle of order, gets up from his throne and thereby anarchy sets in, aggravated by his encountering an old half-blind woman, symbol of an individual's cognitively unawakened and spiritually dimmed state. While the king, though mental-spiritually awake (*rig-pa*) succumbs to his not-quite-so-mental-spiritual nature (*ma-rig-pa*), five female thieves make off with his precious jewel box. They are the five senses that are not, as we are accustomed to think of them, mere receptors, but generative and creative in making our world appreciable. Because of their creativity they are conceived of as feminine in character. They are thieves because they, no longer held in check, selfishly turn whatever they encounter into dull things that have lost all their previous aesthetic vibrancy. So far the number five has been accounted for. What about the number six? They are the same as the five female thieves with the domineering ego added. Its influence effects a change of "sex," as we would say in our obsession with sex, so that we now have six mobsters, six men (persons) of darkness, darkness being what is otherwise known as an individual's "unexcitedness" and/or "unexcitability" (*ma-rig-pa*). Each of these six men (persons) of darkness have their specific lodgings, referred to as the six settlements of the outcasts (*sme-sha-*(*can*))[185]. They derive no benefits from the stolen jewel because in their darkness they fail to understand that this jewel pertains to a higher level that cannot become effective by merely paying lip-service to it. This higher level is, mythopoetically felt and imaged, the *Lichtmensch* ("Archetypal Man," *khye'u*). He recognizes what the old woman stands for

[185] For the exact meaning of this term see above p. 71 and note 158.

and imparts his knowledge to the king, the mundane aspect of the supra-mundane *Lichtmensch*, who now, happy and content, restores law and order. The concluding sentence in this allegory reflects the gnostic ideas of an *epignōsis* and *anachōrēsis*,[186] with which Vimalamitra was well acquainted.

This homecoming and recognizing what one really is, is a luminous and dynamic experience carrying with it an intentionality in the sense of a meaning-bestowing or meaning-positing (*Sinnsetzung*) and fresh vision that goes far beyond the tribulations of one's enworldedness.[187] This is the theme of the following allegory:[188]

> Previously, in a small crystal room, flawless and dissipative,[189] a prince Kun-tu-gzigs ("He who is gazing everywhere") had a precious vessel. Although in it there were five intensely shining oil-lamps, he did not see a single one, but stayed alone.

In this allegory, the prince's name Kun-tu-gzigs deserves special attention. While in the preceding allegories the phenomenon of Light (*'od*) was spoken of in terms of an experience of its lighting-up (*snang-ba*) as a seemingly "objective" event, an all-around coming-to-light (*kun-tu-snang-ba*), here this Light is spoken of in terms of a seemingly "subjective" experience of a non-objectifying and hence, strictly speaking, non-subjectifying gaze (*gzigs*). This experience is unique in the sense that it cannot and must not to be confused with a philosophical solipsism or a pathological autism. In the above allegory's mythopoetic language this uniqueness is expressed by the experiencer's "being alone" (*gcig-pu*), which is to say that such a person is "exceptional" but not at all lost to the world because as a "prince" (*rgyal-bu*) he is the link between the past that is his father, the "king" (*rgyal-po*), and the future that he is about to usher in by his visionary gaze.

Lest this "being alone" creates a wrong impression and leads to unwarranted conclusions on the part of us as listeners, Vimalamitra sums up his lengthy dissertation in an allegory that holistically accounts for the paradox

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[186] See above p. 76.

[187] "Far beyond the tribulations of one's enworldedness" is the literal rendering of the Tibetan word *mya-ngan-las-'das-pa*, itself a hermeneutical interpretation of the Sanskrit word *nirvāna*. In its Sanskrit context this word has a pre-eminently static connotation.

[188] Loc. cit.:

> *sngon shel-gyi khang-bu dri-med zang-thal-gyi nang-na/ rgyal-bu kun-tu-gzigs bya-ba la/ rin-po-che'i bum-pa-na/ mar-me'i snying-po lnga gsal yang/ khos gcig ma-mthong-bar gcig-pur gnas skad-do*

[189] On the exact meaning of its Tibetan term *zang-thal*, see above p. 59 note 129.

of an experienced multiplicity or multiplex as a simplicity or simplex in being an emergent lighting-up. This analogy runs as follows:[190]

> Previously, out of the dimension of the open sky/*spatium* a thousand oil-lamps had come to the fore. While their light blended, their (individual) intensity did not blend but shone distinctly. This is to say that apart from the lamps' own light (*rang-'od/rang-snang*) there is no other lighting-up (*gzhan-snang*).

The Continuity of the "Down and Up Again" theme in its allegorical presentation

The incredible intellectual-spiritual ferment that marked the emergence of what was to become known as the experience-based and process-oriented, holistic (rDzogs-chen) mode of thinking in which Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra were the major proponents, showed already signs of a weakening long before ideological (religio-political) factionalism and military adventures with their inevitable failures led to a crisis in the eighth century. The so-called Samye (*bsam-yas*) debate (about 792 CE) that was not a debate in the sense as we understand this word, but a presentation of two different perspectives, was cooked up, for political reasons, to get rid of foreigners. Regardless of whether, as in the case of Padmasambhava, they hailed from Urgyan (Oḍḍiyāna)[191] or, as in the case of Śrīsiṁha (dPal Seng-ge), also known as the Hva-shang Mahāyāna, from China, their expulsion served the purpose of imposing the Indian epistemology-oriented and logic-based form of Buddhism on what had been a multifaceted, syncretistic (in the best sense of the word), intellectual-spiritual environment. In addition to expelling the leading figures, their sympathizers and/or followers were sent into exile, as was the case with Vairocana (a Tibetan having adopted an Indian name). In retrospect we can boldly say that all these measures were strikingly similar to what in the modern political jargon is called "ethnic cleansing" and "re-location of

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[190] Loc. cit.:

> *sngon nam-mkha' stong-pa'i ngang-las/ mar-me stong shar-bas/ 'od 'dres-nas snying-po ma-'dres-par so-sor gsal te/ mar-me-la rang-'od-las snang-ba gzhan med skad-do*

[191] Urgyan, also spelled Orgyan, is an ill-defined region that extended from Central Asia along the Silk Road over the Iranian plateau to what is now known as the Middle Near East. For further details see Herbert Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava*, pp. 4-7.

ethnic groups," and propagated as a sure cure for domestic difficulties. As an "Indian" (whatever this designation may have meant to the Tibetans), Vimalamitra was "acceptable" and hence escaped the fate of many of his contemporaries. While it is not surprising that he, like his contemporary Padmasambhava, as a member of the "old order" (*rnying-ma*) is never mentioned in any of the "new order" (*gsar-ma*) Tibetan works, foremost among them the writings of Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419) and his disciples, it remains a strange fact that only one of his works has been singled for inclusion in a select collection of *rnying-ma* texts.[192]

It is Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa Dri-med-'od-zer (1308-1364) who after nearly five hundred years rescues Vimalamitra's *Rig-pa rang-shar* from oblivion and selects and re-edits six chapters from it for his own presentation of the 'Down and Up again' theme by way of eight allegories, neatly divided into four 'down(s)' and four 'up(s) again.'

In one of his monumental works, the *Theg-mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod*[193] he begins with an overview of the cosmo-anthropic whole's going astray into increasingly frustrating situations and mistaken identification by first quoting the *Rig-pa rang-shar* and then explicating some of the meanings of the allegorically used expressions.

This is how he presents this overview in his version of the *Rig-pa rang-shar*:[194]

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[192] This is the *Rig-pa rang-shar chen-po'i rgyud*. Its earliest (?) preserved version is found in the sDe-dge edition of the *rNying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*, 3: 152b-284a. This version is taken over verbatim into the edition based on the A-'dzom blocks, the *rNying-ma'i rgyud bcu-bdun* (referred to in the following notes as Ati, vol. 1, followed by the respective column number of the individual allegories). It is the only work that has an interlinear commentary by an unknown author.

[193] sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, chapter X, fols. 162a-169b.

[194] Loc. cit., fol. 162a (sDe-dge, 3: 189ab; Ati, vol. 1, column 523):

> *kye grogs-po dag*
> *dag-pa'i sangs-rgyas-la 'khrul-pa mi-mnga' yang/ rdo-rje-sems-dpa' gzhi-thog-nas 'khrul-lugs ni/ yul yangs-pa-can zhes-bya-ba-nas 'khrul-lo// gnas mdzes-ldan zhes-bya-ba-nas 'khrul-lo // dus nam-sros-pa dang 'khrul-lo // lo phag-gi lo-la 'khrul-lo // nyi-ma sbrul-[gyi nyi-ma-]la 'khrul-lo// skar-ma bya-la 'khrul-lo// mi'i ming ni rgan-mo ling-tog-can zhes-bya-ba 'khrul-lo // rus ni ma-nges-pa-la'khrul-lo // rogs mi-bzhis byas-so //*
> *de-nas mi-rgod-pa lnga byung-ngo // de-nas rgyab-rten-pa mi-gcig byung-no// de-nas rkun-mo mi-gcig byung-ngo// de thams-cad bsogs-pas mi-gcig byung-ngo// de la-sogs-pa['i] dmag-gi tshogs dpag-tu-med-par 'khrul-lo // de-la 'khrul-gzhi med-pa-las byung-ba'i phyir-na / srid-pa zhes-bya-bar chags-so// sems-can-gyi gzugs bsam-gyis-*

Hi-ho! Friends,

Although in the pure (darkness-)gone/(light)-expanding experience there does not exist any errancy, errancy sets in with rDo-rje-sems-dpa' (as) the ground (of one's being) in such a manner that errancy starts from (this ground [imaged as]) a country (by the name of) Yangs-pa-can. [In a narrower sense,] errancy starts from (this country's) locale (by the name of) mDzes-ldan.

The time (when) this errancy starts is the depth of night. (In this errancy,) what is the year (is) mistakenly identified as a pig; what is the sun (is) mistakenly identified as a snake; (and) what is the star (is) mistakenly identified as a bird [a cock].

[There] is a person who is mistakenly identified as an old woman (by the name of) Ling-tog-can. (Her) lineage (is) mistakenly identified with [the ground's] indeterminacy. Four persons are (her) companions.

Then there emerged five ruffians. Then there emerged a back-up man. Then there emerged a thief. Altogether they formed a single individual. [Together with this person] there emerged countless (other) persons (who) were mistakenly identified as countless (soldiers).

Since (what is) the ground and reason for (this) errancy has emerged from the what-is-not, it settled (down) as (our) probabilistic (universe). Unimaginably (varied) forms of sentient beings emerged. The course of errancy and whatever ideas one may have (about its ending also) emerged.

Rather than attempting to render Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa Dri-med-'od-zer's and the otherwise unknown author's interlinear comments on this overview into English, which would themselves require lengthy explications, let us start with this overview afresh and utilize the various comments in ferreting out this allegory's deeper meaning.

The very first challenge (as far as we are concerned) comes with the mentioning of rDo-rje-sems-dpa' and his relationship with what is called the "ground" (*gzhi*) in the double sense of the "ground and reason for" there being something, provided that this *some thing* is not already an instance of some mistaken identification. Who is rDo-rje-sems-dpa'? Klong-chen-pa's explication of him (or what he stands for) by *rig-pa* is itself, to say the least, problematic, because *rig-pa*, a dynamic term, cannot be understood reductionistically. A more satisfactory and highly revealing an-

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mi-khyab-pa byung-ngo // 'khrul-pa'i lam dang bsam-pa yang ji-ltar bsams-pa'i rtog-pa (ltar rtog-pa) byung-ngo// zhes-so

Words or syllables in brackets are redundant or the block-carver's errors. Words in parenthesis are left out in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's sDe-dge block-prints, but are found in the sDe-dge edition of the *rNying-ma'i rgyud-'bum* and in the A-'dzom block-prints.

swer to the question of what is meant by rDo-rje-sems-dpa' is given by Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po (11th century), quoting from a work whose authorship is attributed to Śrīsiṁha and Vairocana, contemporaries of Vimalamitra.[195] The relevant passage that itself is an explication of the title of the work he quotes, runs as follows:[196]

> *rDo-rje-sems-dpa'* (as) the eigenbeing (transformation) of the *byang-chub-sems* [197] (has remained) unconditionally (itself) throughout the three aspects of time and neither transmigrates nor changes, which is to say that because of its utter stability (another expression for it is) *rDo-rje-sems-dpa'*. The word *sems-dpa'* also means an understand-

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[195] This is the *rDo-rje-sems-dpa' nam-mkha' che kun-tu-bzang-po gsang-ba-snying-po'i rgyud*, 25: 179b-205a.

[196] *bKa'-'bum*, pp. 274-276:

> ***rdo-rje-sems-dpa'*** *ni [275] byang-chub-sems-kyi rang-bzhin dus-gsum 'dus-ma-byas shing/ 'pho-'gyur-gyi gnas myed de/ shin-tu brtan-pa'i phyir* ***rdo-rje-sems-dpa'****o //* ***sems-dpa'i*** *sgra rtogs-pa-la yang 'jug ste/ don de-lta-bu nyid rang-byung-gi ye-shes chen-pos dbang-bskur te/ rang-bzhin-gyis 'od-gsal-ba'i phyir yang* ***rdo-rje-sems-dpa'****o //* ***nam-mkha'*** *ni dngos-po-myed bzhin-du kun-la khyab-pa'i dpe/* ***che-ba*** *ni byang-chub-sems-kyi yon-tan te/ byang-chub-kyi sems* ***rdo-rje-sems-dpa'*** *de yang rtag-tu che-ba-rnams lnga dang ldan-nas bzhugs-so zhes-bya-ba'i don to// mdor bsdu-na gzugs thams-cad-kyi rang-bzhin nam-mkha'i ngo-bo-nyid yin-pa de-bzhin-du/ chos thams-cad-kyi rang-bzhin* ***rdo-rje-sems-dpa'i*** *rang-bzhin-du sangs-rgyas-so zhes-bya-ba'i don to // byang-chub-kyi sems kun-tu-bzang-po'i sgras chos thams-cad de'i rang-bzhin-du sangs-rgyas-par bstan-pa/* ***kun-bzang yangs-pa chos-kyi dbyings*** *shes-bya ste/ de-la* ***kun*** *zhes-bya-ba'i sgra ni ma-'dres-pa dang yongs-su-rdzogs-pa'i chos thams-cad ste/ de-la* ***ma-dres-pa*** *ni sna-tshogs-su snang-ba/* ***yongs-su-rdzogs-pa*** *ni rang-bzhin [276] mi-gnyis-pa'o// de-dag thams-cad-kyi thams-cad-du ngan cing dor-bar bya-ba myed-pas* ***kun-tu-bzang-po'o*** *// chos thams-cad-kyi ngo-bo-nyid de yin te/ dper-na nam-mkha' ni gzugs-can thams-cad-kyi rang-bzhin-du gnas shing go-'byed-pa yin yang dog-pa-myed-pa bzhin-du/ kun-tu-bzang-po'i rang-bzhin-du ma-gyur-pa'am ma-'dus-pa myed-pas* ***yangs-pa*** *ste/ de'i phyir chos-kyi dbyings-so// mdor-bsdu-na chos thams-cad ni* ***byang-chub-kyi sems rdo-rje-sems-dpa'i*** *rang-bzhin nam/ byang-chub-kyi sems kun-tu-bzang-po'i rang-bzhin-du sangs-rgyas te/ thams-cad-nas thams-cad-du* ***che*** *zhing* ***yangs****-so// de-bas-na rdo-rje-sems-dpa' dang kun-tu-bzang-po'ang don-'dra-la/ che-ba dang yangs-pa'ang don-'dra ste/ ji-skad-du/* ***kun-tu-bzang-p' rdo-rje-sems-dpa'i ngang****/ zhes-bya-ba dang/* ***yangs-so che'o chos-chen-po****/ zhes gsungs-pa lta-bu'o*

[197] I have left this term untranslated in order to emphasize its ontologically dynamic character for which our language has no adequate word. This Tibetan code word might be clumsily broken down as "Being-*qua*-mentality's (*sems*) auto-refinement (*byang*) and consummate perspicacity (*chub*)." The still current rendering of *byang-chub-sems*, Skt. *bodhicitta*, by "thought of enlightenment" is pretty nonsensical. According to the Indian grammarians *bodhicitta* is a *karmadhāraya* compound ("descriptive compound"), not a *tatpuruṣa* compound ("determinative compound").

ing/*inner*standing, which is to say that an ultimately self-originated originary awareness mode gives (one's) existential reality its validity, which again is to say that *rDo-rje-sems-dpa'* is (another term for this existential reality) because of its eigenbeing brilliantly radiating.

The expression *nam-mkha'* ("space," "spatiality," "*spatium*") is (used as) a simile of the all-encompassing (nature of the *byang-chub-sems/rDo-rje-sems-dpa'*) in view of its insubstantiality.

The expression *che-ba* ("greatness") describes the qualitative features of the *byang-chub-sems*, which is to say that the *byang-chub-sems/rDo-rje-sems-dpa'* is always present with its five qualitative features.[198] In brief, in the same manner as the eigenbeing of all visible patterns are of the "stuff" of which space/spatiality is made, the eigenbeing of all (our so-called) realities dissipate and expand (*sangs-rgyas*) into the eigenbeing of *rDo-rje-sems-dpa'*. By the application of the word *kun-tu-bzang-po* ("goodness *par excellence*") to the *byang-chub-sems* it is pointed out that all (our so-called) realities dissipate and expand into the eigenbeing of (what is *byang-chub-sems/rDo-rje-sems-dpa')* as is stated in the stanza

> Goodness (*kun-bzang*), vastness (*yangs-pa*), dimensionality
> of meanings (*chos-kyi dbyings*)

where *kun* means "unadulterated" and "absolutely complete." Here "unadulterated" means multiplicity and "absolutely complete" means non-duality. Since in all this there is nothing evil and/or rejectable, (one speaks of it as) goodness *par excellence* (*kun-tu-bzang-po*). This is the "stuff" of which (our so-called) realities are made, which is to say that, in the same manner as space is the eigenbeing of all that is of the nature of the visible and, in opening a space for them to be, there is no narrowness, so also in the eigenbeing of *kun-tu-bzang-po* there does not take place any change or any conditioning, (and hence one speaks of) vastness (*yangs-pa*), for which reason (one also speaks of it as) the dimensionality where meanings are in (their) *statu nascendi* (*chos-kyi dbyings*).

In brief, all (our so-called) realities present [each in its own way] the eigenbeing of *byang-chub-sems/rDo-rje-sems-dpa'* or (stated otherwise) dissipate and expand into the eigenbeing of *byang-chub-sems/rDo-rje-sems-dpa'*, which is to say that in every respect (they share) in its greatness (*che*) and vastness (*yangs*). Because of that, *rDo-rje-sems-dpa'* and *Kun-tu-bzang-po* are similar in meaning, as are *che-ba* and *yangs-pa*. As one stanza says:

> Kun-tu-bzang-po — the propensity of rDo-rje-sems- dpa'

and another one:

> Vast, great, meaning-*qua*-meaning.

[198] These are its symbol-rich realms, its immense palace (in them), its radiatingly clear rays of light, its especially raised throne, and the wealth of enjoyments.

Though long-winded, this quotation clearly brings out the salient features of rDzogs-chen process-oriented and experienced-based thinking that, on the one hand, demand that we think of two contrary notions (rest and movement, *in*-tensity and *ex*-tensity) as a single dynamic one and that, on the other hand, from the perspective of the *in*-tensity of the experience-*qua*-experience its *ex*-tensity or vastness is more of the nature of a symmetry break that inexorably leads to further symmetry breaks. In mythopoetic language the "culprit" of this symmetry-breaking is the whole system's supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*) imaged as rDo-rje-sems-dpa' who as the whole and yet only an emergent aspect of it displays itself as a spatiality, a country (*yul*) named after its vastness (*yangs-pa*) Yangs-pa-can. To the extent that, in phenomenological diction, this holistic emergence of what we tend to call Being or the ground and reason (*gzhi*) for what is to be, because of its inner dynamic tends to close-in onto itself on its own accord in a variety of "as ifs"[199] and become our locale (*gnas*), in mathematical diction, a kind of scaled-down symmetry transformation, it is called mDzes-ldan ("endowed with what is beautiful") because of the sensuous qualities and feeling tones of the "as ifs" with their wealth of possibilities (even if they should lead us astray in the case of a drop in what is the intensity of our *rig-pa*).

After the terse statement concerning the emergence of "space" as something static and/or stable in the whole's closure onto itself and its mistaken identification by way of thingification as a vast country and a smaller locale, the above quoted *Rig-pa rang-shar* now turns to the emergence of "time" as being something on the move and becoming a source of mistaken identifications. It, too, owes its emergence to a drop in the whole's intensity (*rig-pa*) that fails to recognize what it is in itself and takes it to be something other. This drop in, not lack of, intensity (*ma-rig-pa*) is evocatively described as the depth of night and in its passage leads to three images associated with time: a year, the sun, and a star. In the wake of a drop in awareness, the year is mistakenly identified with a pig, the sun with a snake, and the star with a cock. These pre-eminently visual images are symbolic expressions of a human being's instinctive-affective-emotional nature such that the pig, closest to his unexcited and unexcitable state, expresses his intellectual-spiritual dullness and indiscriminate infatuation with

[199] For details see Herbert V. Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity*, pp. 273-4 n. 1.

anything he comes across; that the sun, especially at noon when it reaches the zenith of its glare, expresses his viciousness that quite literally poisons any situation and interpersonal relationship; and that the cock expresses his concupiscence and lustfulness.

As should be obvious by now, in rDzogs-chen thought space and time are not metaphysical categories in Kant's sense, rather they imply their self-generation as a space-time continuum for the emerging and evolving/unfolding system itself. The effectiveness of this space- and time-binding is tied to the presence of a specific system which, in the present context, is a human being. This is, as the *Rig-pa rang-shar* tells us, an "old woman (by the name of) Ling-tog-can ("cataract-afflicted")." Why is this human being said to be an old woman and why is her name given as Ling-tog-can? It would be a grave mistake to read into this image the wide-spread and almost global misogynism of a male dominance psychology. After all, masculinity and femininity are complementary to each other by, to say the least, giving meaning to the one and/or the other, and it is the feminine that is generative in the broadest sense of the word, while the masculine is executive in the broadest sense of the word. In other words, both masculinity and femininity are mutually enhancing on any level on which they operate. That this woman's name is said to be Ling-tog-can is a further reminder of the fact that we move in a dimension of diminished, not absent, intensity. In this contrast between a diminished intensity (*ma-rig-pa*) and a full intensity (*rig-pa*) we can easily recognize the pervasive principle of complementarity that as the complementarity of femininity and masculinity is mythopoetically presented by images of the feminine Ling-tog-can and the masculine rDo-rje-sems-dpa'.

But there is still more to the pronounced old age of the feminine in the individual's make-up. Though not stated explicitly here, but as we learn elsewhere, this is its complementarity to one of the corporeally seen and felt fore-structures of our being meaning through and through, the *gzhon-nu bum-pa'i sku*.[200]

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[200] This technical term occurs frequently in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's writings and ultimately goes back to Padmasambhava's *sPros-bral don-gsal*, 1: 7b:

> *chos-nyid gsal-ba'i rang-mdangs-las*
> *ye-shes dag-pa'i zer-gdangs shar*
> *'gag-med 'od-kyi gzhal-yas-khang*
> *snying-po sku-lnga nang gsal-bas bum-pa'i sku'o*
> *bgres-pa mi-mnga'-bas gzhon-nu'o*

Though old and half-blind because of what turns out to be only a diminished intensity, her ancestry[201] goes back to the whole's emergence and closure onto itself as a human individual. It is this ancestry that allows itself to be conceived of in two familiar images. As the "ancestral tree" it branches toward the past and gets lost in utter indeterminacy which the stepped-down intensity mistakes for being the last word in the matter; as the "root" it branches toward the future and ends up in a singularity that, on closer inspection, turns out to be a complexity and is cryptically referred by this woman's four companions. By these the reticular causality of representational thinking, the hallmark of the stepped-down intensity, is understood, in which this stepped-down intensity is the momentum in the causal situation and as such one of its four modifiers.[202]

So far the cognitive aspect of the individual as the anthropic co-emergent phenomenon from the cosmic space- and time-binding has been discussed. The allegory now turns to this individual's instinctive-affective-emotional aspect. There are, mythopoetically and analytically speaking, "five ruffians" (literally, "wild men") known otherwise as pollutants that poison everything, be this the individual itself or the whole environment, physical and/or mental, in which he happens to find himself. This bunch of troublemakers is "backed up" (and urged on) by the individual's dichotomic and basically delusional mentation, most conspicuous in his ego-mania. Its evolution and transformation into a thief[203] derives from the ego-

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> From the radiating creativity's own internal brilliance
> Its external brilliance as rays of light of its symbolically expressive originary awareness modes has burst forth (and become)
> A palace of incessant luminescence.
> Since (Being-qua-creativity's) core intensity radiates within (and througout) the five existential fore-structures *(sku)*, it is a vessel *(bum-pa).*
> Since (in it) no aging exists, it (stays) ever young (gzhon-nu*)*.

In this connection the image of the vessel allows itself to be interpreted as the container of the elixir of immortality.

[201] Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa is the only author who in his version of the *Rig-pa rang-shar* speaks of her ancestry (*rus*). All other versions read *dus* "time" which does not make any sense.

[202] For details see Herbert V. Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity,* p, 277 n. 10.

[203] The Tibetan word for it is a feminine noun and as such has nothing to do with misogyny.

maniac's deep-rooted anger and resentment that someone has something that he hasn't. Specifically, a thief's action is based on the presupposition of what is mine is mine and what is yours is also mine. Though listed separately, all the above features go into the making of a single disturbed individual who spawns, as the allegory tells us, countless "soldiers" who, in the contemporary jargon, are indistinguishable from terrorists — an apt description of the psychic in misplaced concreteness!

This first and "introductory" allegory whose main topic has been the presentation of the dynamic in the phenomenon of emergence, ends with a summary statement of what traditionally has been spoken of in terms of a ground, a way, and a goal in isolation, but is here discussed in interconnectedness from a dynamic perspective.

Stylistically the second allegory reflects a storyteller's arousing his audience's interest in and lasting attentiveness to what he is going to narrate. This is what the allegory taken from the *Rig-pa rang-shar* tells us:[204]

> Just imagine! Previously, in the (country) Yangs-pa-can ("Vastness") by name,[205] the teacher/revealer 'Od-'gyed-pa ("Dispenser of Light") by name had two blood-relatives who had been imprisoned in a barren ravine.
>
> Just imagine (further)! Five soldiers turned up and razed (their former) stone castle from top (to bottom).
>
> Just imagine (further)! After these two blood-relatives had been put into a deep pit, an old woman Ling-tog-can ("Cataract-afflicted") by name[206] slammed the (prison-)door shut.

[204] Ati, vol, 1, columns 560-567:

> *sngon yul Yangs-pa-can zhes-bya-ba-na/ ston-pa 'Od-'gyed-pa zhes-bya-ba yod-do// de-la bu-spun gnyis yod de/ grog-po stong-par btson-du bzung zer-te ya-cha/ de-nas dmag-mi lnga byung-nas rdo'i mkhar-rtse-nas bcom zer-te ya-cha/ bu gnyis dong-du bcug-nas/ rgan-mo Ling-tog-can-gyis sgo bcad zer-te ya-cha/ de-nas mi bzhis ded-pas zin te/ mi lnga rta dang phral zer-te ya-cha/ bu gnyis rang-gis rang-shor-nas btson-srungs bsad zer-te ya-cha/ bu gnyis gcig-char phar nyi-ma-can-du bros-nas 'bangs-la dpya bsdus-nas/ btsun-mo nyi-shu-rtsa-gcig-gis gros byas-nas/ bsam-rdugs-kyi lha-khang-du bros te/ mi lngas phub lnga gon-nas sgo srungs-pas/ sus kyang 'ong ma-nus zer-te ya-cha/ de-nas me-long bzhir byad bltas-pas/ rang-ngo rang-gis shes zer-te ya-cha/ de-nas khang-pa cig-a sgo brgyad yod-pa mthong-bas rang-la bgad-mo shor zer-te ya-cha/ de-bzhin brda'i rnam-pa-rnams/ mtshon-nas ye-shes don-la sbyor/ zhes-so*

[205] On this country's (*yul*) or residence's (*khyim*) name see above p. 30 note 59.

[206] See above p. 90 on her role.

> Just imagine (further)! Four persons pursued and captured the five soldiers/riders and unseated them from their horses.
>
> Just imagine (further)! The two blood-relatives set themselves free by themselves and killed their jailers.
>
> Just imagine (further)! The two blood-relatives on the spur of the moment ran away into (the realm that was) of the nature of the sun (*nyi-ma-can*), where they collected taxes from the populace and, after having been counselled by twenty-one ladies of rank (*btsun-mo*), ran farther toward a stunningly wondrous shrine room where five persons, each holding a shield, guarded its door so that none could enter.
>
> Just imagine (further)! When they had seen their faces in four mirrors, they recognized themselves as having come face to face with themselves.
>
> Just imagine (further)! When they saw the one room having eight doors, they broke out in laughter at themselves.
>
> In this way having been shown allegory-rich images, apply their intuitively understood meanings to your existential reality.

The first thing to strike the reader of (or listener to) this allegorical narrative is the near-infinity, the "vastness" (*yangs-pa-can*) of the realm over which the teacher/revealer "Dispenser of Light" (*'Od-'gyed-pa*) spreads the light that he is. As a matter of fact, his very name is already a metaphor for the sun (*nyi-ma*) that cannot but let this teacher/revealer's realm participate in his light and thus become a sun-lit realm (*nyi-ma-can*), as this allegory subsequently tells us. My speaking of this realm's vastness as a near-infinity, an approximation perfect symmetry in mathematical diction, has been prompted by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's and the unknown commentator's exegesis of the teacher/revealer as "a self-originated originary awareness mode" or *Urwissen* (*rang-byung-gi ye-shes*) and as "a self-originated originary awareness mode as a function of a supraconscious ecstatic intensity that radiates in an unbiased and impartial manner" (*rig-pa rang-byung-gi ye-shes phyogs-med-du gsal-ba*). Now, whenever an originary awareness mode is mentioned and phenomenologically conceived of as the "founded" (*brten*), its "founding" stratum (*rten*) is tacitly implied. Because of the embodied experiencer's ubiquitous presence, this founding stratum is referred to as a visibly felt corporeal pattern (*sku*). Since, except for descriptive purposes, the founding and the founded cannot be separated from or added to each other, just as the teacher/revealer (and his audience) cannot be thought of apart from his/their locale, this complexity's "vastness" is explicated by the unknown commentator as being the *gzhon-nu*

bum-pa'i sku.[207] At the same time this vastness is said to be the "primal ground and reason for one's going astray" (*dang-po'i 'khrul-gzhi*) which as an emergent phenomenon allows us to speak of it as the first symmetry break in the whole's "perfect symmetry" and hence, because of its closeness to it, as an approximation symmetry on the brink of further symmetry-breaking phase spaces. It is here that the principle of complementarity comes into full play.

Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa explicates the two blood-relatives as the teacher/revealer's supraconscious ecstatic intensity's symbolic pregnance (*rig-pa ka-dag*) and (his) spontaneity's originary awareness mode(s) (*lhun-grub-kyi ye-shes*), while the unknown commentator bluntly speaks of them as being the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*) itself and its stepped-down intensity (*ma-rig-pa*) that in course of the ongoing symmetry-breaking takes the upper hand. Both authors agree in illustrating the imprisonment of the two blood-relatives in a barren ravine by an image that reflects the experiencer's utter confusion: a mother is mistaken for her child and her child for its mother. But worse things are going to happen: five "soldiers" (*dmag-mi*) or, in the light of the subsequent events more properly speaking, gangsters or terrorists "raze" the "stone castle," a seemingly secure place, where the blood-relatives had been living before they were kidnapped and imprisoned, "from its top" down to its bottom. These soldiers/gangsters/terrorists are the darker side of a human being's nature and characterized as five pollutants (*nyon-mongs*) or poisons (*dug*): passion/lustfulness, irritability/hatred, dullness/infatuation, arrogance/conceit, and jealousy/envy. Once the two blood-relatives have been led away into what is to be their prison, they are thrown into a deep pit out of which there is no longer any escape possible. A notorious old woman who, in a certain sense, is the quintessence of the stepped-down intensity and in her near-blindness brought about all this trouble, has slammed the door shut.

Certainly, matters could hardly get worse in this dismal situation of being kept prisoners by ruthless soldiers/gangsters/terrorists in a dark pit with its exit securely guarded by an old woman who despite her age is by no means decrepit. It is precisely at this point that things take a turn for the better. Even the language of the allegory makes this clear. There is no longer any talk about soldiers or gangsters or terrorists (*dmag-mi* – sub-

[207] See above p. 89.

humans for short), and a pit's impenetrable darkness. Rather, four humans (*mi*) arrive and route these sub-humans by unseating them from their horses, organismic animal-like forces, on which they ride and tempestuously are carried away, for sober thinking, even in its rudimentary form, is not one of these scoundrels' assets. The four humans are a person's heightened sensitivities, discriminative-appreciative cognitions (*shes-rab*) that clean up the fragmentizing tendencies of the pollutants (*nyon-mongs*) together with their underlying currents, imaged as panicking horses, and restore them to their original symbolic expressiveness.[208] In particular, as a "setting free" discriminative-appreciative cognition (*sgrol-byed-kyi shes-rab*), it frees the pollutants of what has turned their cognitive character into its distortion as affective-emotional outbursts, and restores their original (unpolluted) intuitive cognition; as a "gathering" discriminative-appreciative cognition (*sdud-byed-kyi shes-rab*), it gathers the pollutants freed from their distortions into what is their originary awareness mode(s) (*ye-shes*); as a "separating" discriminative-appreciative cognition (*'byed-byed-kyi shes-rab*), it effects a separation of the pollutants from the originary awareness mode(s); and as a "dispatching" discriminative-appreciative cognition (*skyod-byed-kyi shes-rab*), it dispatches the fields of the discriminative-appreciative cognitions into their supraordinate dimension (*dbyings*) where the meanings with which the diverse cognitions eventually become involved, are potentially present and/or in their *statu nascendi*. In the context of these four discriminative-appreciative cognitions it may not be out of place to say a few words about the intimate relationship between the discriminative-appreciative cognitions (*shes-rab*) and the originary awareness

[208] Though formally corresponding to the Sanskrit word *prajñā*, usually rendered as "wisdom" without taking into account the context in which it occurs or even bothering about what the word wisdom means, to say nothing about the use of the Sanskrit word in Sanskrit works and its status within the framework of Buddhist philosophy/psychology, the Tibetan word *shes-rab* denotes an intensification (*rab*) of the individual's basic cognitive capacity (*shes*) with the added connotations of discrimination and appreciation in the service of the individual's mental-spiritual maturation. As a dynamic function it operates on an individual's triune hierarchically organized levels, described in terms of the external, the internal, and the arcane, in distinct modes and, accordingly, spoken of as *phyi'i shes-rab, nang-gi shes-rab,* and *gsang-ba'i shes-rab*. See, for instance, *Thig-le gsang-ba yang-gter* (Taipei ed., vol. 55, p. 415 column 3); *gSang-ba yang-gter* (ibid., p. 417 column 6). Its intimate connexion with *ye-shes* is already pointed out by Padmasambhava in his *Thig-le ye-shes bcud-spungs sgron-ma 'od-'bar-ba*, 2: 318b. This connexion between *shes-rab* and *ye-shes* is specifically elaborated by Vimalamitra in his *Lha-mo 'od-zer-can* (Taipei ed., vol. 55, p. 458 column 5).

modes (*ye-shes*), because it forms a distinct phase in the long process of empowering, in the sense of strengthening, a person to pursue his goal of "growing up" and becoming authentic, a "king" in the phraseology of hermeticism, rather than remaining an underling. In the words of Padmasambhava:[209]

> Holistically speaking, the notion of *shes-rab ye-shes* means the following:
>
> *shes* — the (proto-)light of the feminine ground,[210]
>
> *rab* — the (mutual) re-cognitions of mother and child;
>
> *ye* — (the fact that) there is no beginning,
>
> *shes* — (the fact that) "world" is/becomes "free in/by itself;[211]
>
> *dbang* — the corporeally seen and felt pattern of our being as meaning through and through,
>
> *bskur* — non-referentiality;[212]
>
> *thob* — (Being's) creativity (remaining its) invariance;[213]

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[209] *sNang-srid kha-sbyor* (Taipei ed., vol. 55, p. 574 column 6):

shes-rab ye-shes rdzogs-lugs ni
shes ni gzhi-mo'I 'od-las shes
rab ni ma-bu gnyis ngo-sprad
ye ni thog-ma med-pa ste
shes ni kun-'byung rang-grol shes
dbang ni chos-kyi sku-la dbang
bskur ni dmigs dang bral-bar bskur
thob ni chos-nyid 'gyur-med thob
rdzogs ni rang-sems rang-la rdzogs

[210] The "ground and reason" (*gzhi*) for there being what we would call our universe including ourselves, is thought of as being feminine because of its generative power. There are two words to express this feminine characcter: *gzhi-ma* (*Thig-le gsang-ba yang-gter*) and *gzhi-mo* (*sNang-srid kha-sbyor*). The particles *ma* and *mo* emphasize the ground's mothering (*ma*) and nurturing (*mo*) quality, respectively.

[211] Strictly speaking, this line is untranslatable by ordinary standards. The Tibetan word *kun-'byung* that I have translated as "world" in quotation marks, describes Being's (the whole's) transformative emergence (*'byung*) into the totality (*kun*) of our mistaken notions about it and hence constitutes the sum-total of our tribulations by way of its terrorizing pollutant forces (*nyon-mongs*). However, having emerged out of the whole's "nothingness/no-thing-ness," "world" is itself nothing, no-thing, and, because of the dynamic in its emergence, does not allow itself to be caught up in the frustrations of its own making and hence "frees itself" or, more precisely stated, "stands free" (*grol*) of the tribulations of its own (*rang*) no-thing-ness dynamic. Linguistically speaking, the Tibetan verbal expression is neither a transitive verb (*sgrol*) nor an intransitive verb (*'grol*). It belongs to a "category" that does not exist in the Aristotelian language system on which our language is based.

[212] Another term for it would be "self-reflexiveness."

[213] "Invariance" (*'gyur-med*) does not mean or imply staticness.

rdzogs — (one's) mentation-(*qua*-mentation) (remaining its) own.[214]

In the above exegesis of *shes-rab* and *ye-shes* in their evolving intimacy as *shes-rab ye-shes* in the first half of Padmasabhava's presentation, imperceptibly linking up with the second half that intimates our coming into our own as luminous beings as an acquisition (*thob*) of Being's gift (*bskur*) of inner strength (*dbang*),[215] two points deserve mentioning, not in the least because of the fact that the rDzogs-chen thinkers never lost sight of the human element in their quest. This human element has found its expression in the image of a mother and her child. On the level of the experiencer's stepped-down intensity, marked by the predominance of the assertive mode of his egocentric and egological thinking that by its fragmentizing and dimming down its field of vision gets ever more confused, this mother-child experience is the first to suffer and, as the allegory's interpreters had stated, the one is mistaken for the other with dire consequences. On the level of the experiencer's fully developed intensity, both mother and child are, in the deeply felt mother-child experience, recognized as to what each of them is as such in mutually joyous serenity.

Let us now return to the main events in the above allegory. While the four humans (*mi*) who are the four discriminative-appreciative cognitions mentioned above, tackle the five sub-humans (*dmag-mi*) who are the five most prominent affective-disruptive forces in a person's psyche, the two blood-relatives slip out of their prison and "kill their goalers" for good measure. While this language of "killing" reflects our everyday life predicament, its psychological implication is, as Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa states, that these blood-relatives are (the approximation whole's) ownmost ecstatic intensity (*rang-rig*) that in its re-cognition of itself as what it is (*ngo-shes*) makes the (egocentric) blunderings that obscure and/or curtail (this intensity's radiance) as well as the (egological) representational

[214] The term *rang-sems* denoting the self-reflexive (self-referential, having no other referant than itself) as a characterization of the individual at the level of consciousness, is synonymous with *sems-nyid* and *rang-rig*. As *in-tensity* it is inseparable from *ex*-tensity that as creativity (*chos-nyid*) sets out to create and re-create "world" in the light of *in*-tensity.

[215] The phrase *dbang bskur thob* has found a lengthy explanation by Padmasambhava in his *rGyud-kyi rtse-rgyal nyi-zla 'od-'bar mkha'-klong rnam-dag rgya-mtsho-klong gsal-gyi rgyud*, 1: 130ab. Its concluding sentence that we would call the chapter heading, states that this gift or bestowal of strength (*dbang*) with its attending transporting force (*byin-rlabs*) is not to be expected to come from something or someone other than the system under consideration itself.

thinking modes fed by the pollutants, the instinctive-affective forces, disappear without leaving any trace by virtue of their dissolving themselves by themselves (*rang-grol*). The unknown commentator is slightly more elaborate. The blood-relatives' slipping away is seen by him as a vision of their former castle in the vastness (*yangs-pa-can*) of the dimension (*dbyings*) in which meanings are in *statu nascendi*, and the killing of their goalers is understood as the abolition of the egocentric and egological subject-object dichotomy by the "originary awareness mode(s) as functions of the supra-conscious ecstatic intensity radiating in an unbiased and impartial manner" having arisen.

With this slipping out of the pitch-black prison-pit and running "home" into what is a sun-lit dimension (*nyi-ma-can*), they leave the realm of postulational-representational thinking with its increasing darkness behind and open themselves up to a realm of "feeling," not in any judgmental sense, but in the sense of welcoming and responding to the near-infinite spectrum of what this realm has to offer in terms of qualities by interacting with them, such that both sides, the subject and the object, touch and shape each other. In the semi-political language of the allegory, the blood-relatives of the teacher/revealer (who also in other allegories is spoken of as "king") "collect taxes from the populace." This provocative statement is explicated in highly technical terms, without any reference to the "populace," by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa to the effect that[216]

> Once the (experiencer's) *rig-pa* has been placed in his eye(s), by looking at the lighting-up of the *dbyings-rig,* the five doors of perception are subdued (by its brilliance) and a plethora of "feelings" (*nyams*)[217] gather in (what is their) self-manifested (presence).

No less technical is the unknown commentator's explication that, apart from being a mixture of Sanskrit and Tibetan words, introduces terms discussed at length by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa. This explication runs as follows:[218]

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[216] Loc. cit.:

> *rig-pa mig-la bcug-nas dbyings-rig-gi snang-ba-la bltas-pas sgo-lnga zil-gyis gnon-nas nyams sna-tshogs rang-shar-du 'dus-pa'o*

[217] Traditionally nine such "feelings" are mentioned, all of them having a sensuous-sensual quality.

[218] Ati, volume 1, column 564:

> *dhātu-rig-pa'i sgron-ma'i nang-du thig-le-stong-pa'i sgron-ma 'dus te/ mig-nas lam byung-nas rang-snang-gi nam-mkha'-la rang-bzhin-gyi 'od-gdangs bzhugs-so*

> Within the lamp that is the *dhātu-rig-pa* there has gathered (another) lamp that is the *thig-le stong-pa*. Once (their) course has started from (their experiencer's) eyes they settle as the effulgence of the experiencer's) eigenbeing in the *spatium* of its own lighting-up.[219]

Though hardly an explication of the "collecting taxes," both quotations have something important to say about the subject-object relationship as an integral feedback process. This is clearly brought out by the exegesis of the compound *dbyings-rig* about which Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa first, succinctly, states:[220]

> *dbyings* and *rig-pa* can neither be added to nor subtracted from each other, they abide like the sun and its rays of light [,]

and then, taking up a condensed version of Vimalamitra (probably written by himself) elaborates as follows:[221]

> The "stuff" (of which) *dbyings* (dimension) and *rig-pa* (excitation) (is made) is as follows:
>
> *dbyings* is of two kinds:
>
> An external and an internal *dbyings;*
>
> The external *dbyings* is [untrammeled by causal modifiers like the cloudless] sky;

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[219] Suffice it say that the term "lamp" in both expressions, *dhātu-rig-pa'i sgron-ma* and *thig-le-stong-pa'i sgron-ma*, does not refer to the gadget called "lamp," but to its illuminating capacity.

In "pure" Tibetan, *dhātu-rig-pa* would be *dbyings-rig.* The most detailed exegesis of the phrase *thig-le-stong-pa'i sgron-ma* ("the lamp that is (the system's) *in*-formation dynamic that does not allow permanent structures to persist") has been given by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa on the basis of works contained in the Ati collection, in his *Tshig-don rin-po-che'i mdzod* (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Ga,* fols. 55b-58a).

[220] *mKha-'gro yang-tig*, part 2, column 399:

> *de'ang dbyings dang rig-pa 'du-'bral-med-pa nyi-ma dang 'od-zer-kyi tshul-du gnas te*

[221] *Bi-ma snying-tig,* part 2, column 38:

> *dbyings dang rig-pa'i ngo-bo ni*
> *dbyings-la rnam-pa gnyis yod ste*
> *phyi'i dbyings dang nang-gi dbyings-so*
> *phyi'i dbyings ni [rkyen sprin dang bral-ba] nam-mkha'o*
> *nang-dbyings rnam-dag [ste yi-ge na-ro lta-bu] sgron-ma'o*
> *rig-pa nyid kyang gnyis yin te*
> *rig-pa'i cha-shas [thig-le] gdangs dang ni*
> *rig-pa [rdo-rje lu-gu-rgyud] rang-gi ngo-bo'o*
> *mdor-na dbyings-rig khyim dang bdag-po'i tshul rnam-pa gnyis*

Words in parentheses are interlinear glosses.

The internal *dbyings* is (the former's) symbolic expressiveness [like the ‿ sign][222] (as a) lamp;

rig-pa also is of two kinds:

Part of it is the [*in*-formation (*thig-le*) dynamic's] effulgence,

As [the adamantine coherence, *rdo-rje lu-gu-rgyud*] it is the very "stuff" (of which it is made, *rang*).

In brief, the relationship between the *dbyings* and the *rig-pa* is like that between a house and the master of the house.

But still no word about the "populace" whose existence presupposes the presence of a "king." A clue for this omission may be found in the remark of this *rig-pa* (so different from one's everyday *ma-rig-pa*) being made to reside in one's eyes that now start "seeing" and actively outlining the way we are going to proceed, rather than passively receiving impressions with which we, because of our prevailing unexcitedness and unexcitability (*ma-rig-pa*), do not know what to do. For this kind of seeing, I may be permitted to coin a neologism and speak of it as an *alētheic* vision, *alētheic* being derived from the Greek word *alētheia* as re-interpreted by Martin Heidegger as "unconcealment." In the light of the above, the unknown commentator's cryptic remarks lose much of their crypticness and allow themselves to be rendered intelligibly. This is what the unknown commentator has to say:[223]

When by the (above mentioned) lamps that which lights-up as being of the nature of objects, the totality of the pollutants, has arisen as the originary awareness modes' lighting-up, the utter engagement and enjoyment of it is like a king.

The five sense perceptions are like the populace. When through their affinity with (the king's luminous nature) their luminous nature has been subdued (by the king's luminosity) and, after they have arisen as (the king's) originary awareness modes' own object character and do not (allow themselves to) come under an alien power, they light up as (the system's) proto-light. When the lighting-up of the originary awareness modes has arisen as the five courses (these originary awareness modes may take), the five sense perceptions have been put down (to their proper functioning).

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[222] In the present context this sign intimates the bridging of the external and the internal.

[223] Ati, volume 1, column 564:

sgron-ma des kyang yul-can-gyi snang-ba nyon-mongs thams-cad ye-shes-kyi snang-bar shar-nas de-la rab-tu spyod-pa'i rig-pa rgyal-po'i tshul/ sgo-lnga 'bangs-kyi tshul rigs-pa'i ngo-bos sgo-lnga'i 'od-kyi snang-ba zil-gyis mnan-nas ye-shes rang-yul-du shar-nas snang-ba gzhan-dbang-du ma-song-bar 'od-du snang-ba'o// ye-shes-kyi snang-ba lam-lnga-la 'od shar-nas sgo-lnga cham-la bab-pa'o

The message is clear if we remind ourselves of the fact which the Tibetans never forgot, that the Sanskrit word for the Tibetan word *rgyal-po*, meaning "king," is *rājah* (Anglicized as *raja*/raja), derived from the root *rāj* "to shine," and that the "alien power" is the sum total of the pollutants under the control of the ego who, in political diction, as the "minister" tends to misuse the populace for selfish ends (and, as the cognate passages recommend, had better be put into prison and kept there).

On their way home the two blood-relatives are counselled by twenty-one ladies of rank (*btsun-mo*). Why the number twenty-one and why the emphasis on ladies of rank? This last part of the question is easily answered. The blood-relatives' running home, reminiscent of the Gnostic *anachōrēsis*, a return to one's origins, and the Gnostic *epignōsis*, a remembering of one's sun-lit home (*nyi-ma-can*), is an entering into the innermost recesses of the psyche that in its generative-creative power is, mythopoetically speaking, feminine in character. The subject matter of this counselling is one's "coming face to face (*ngo-sprod*) with one's Self (oneself)" that within the framework of the living and the whole's self-organization is of utmost importance or, as a past and static worldview would claim, of "absolute necessity." The importance of this "coming face to face with one's Self (oneself)" is well attested to by the enormous amount of literature that in course of time gathered around this feeling-idea. The most lucid account of what is meant by this *ngo-sprod* in the present context, at least for someone somehow familiar with process-oriented thinking, is presented by the unknown commentator who declares:[224]

> [The counselling by twenty-one ladies of rank] implies the necessity to "feel" the twenty-one encounters with one's Self (oneself), which means that, although one's existential reality is not something that can be said (thingifyingly) to have an origin, (any one of) its encounters creates a definable characteristic that then must be pointed out by analogies. Here, in linking the images of a corporeal pattern (*sku*) and (some proto-)light (*'od*) with the lighting-up of the originary awareness modes that reveal these images, it so happens that the originary

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[224] Loc. cit., columns 564-565:

> *de-ltar ngo-sprod nyi-shu-rtsa-gcig-gis nyams-su blangs dgos te de yang don-la skye-ba med kyang mtshan-ma skyed-byed yod-pas dpe-rnams-kyis mtshon dgos te de-la sku dang 'od-du bstan-[565] pa'i ye-shes-kyi snang-ba dang sbyar-nas snang-ba de-las ye-shes-kyis yid 'phro-'du zad de snang-ba rang-snang-ba yin-no// 'od rang-'od/ sku ni rang-gi rig-pa'o// de yang rang-gi shes-rab-kyis chod-par byas-nas rkyen-gyis dbang-du rig-pa ma-song-ba'o*

> awareness modes forming themselves in this lighting-up, put an end to the fluctuations/vagaries of egocentric and egological mentation, and in their lighting-up are their auto-lighting-up (*rang-snang*). The (proto-)light (in this lighting-up) is its own (proto-)light (*rang-'od*). The corporeal pattern (in this lighting-up) is its own ecstatic intensity (*rang-gi rig-pa*). Since by its (inherent) own discriminative-appreciative cognitions it has done away with the causal momentum and its modifiers (pertaining to the level of postulational-representational thinking), this *rig-pa* does not come under their power.

Reformulated in contemporary diction, these encounters with one's Self (oneself), summed up in three outstanding phenomena, the (pre-ontological and pre-ontic) lighting-up (*snang*) as the first symmetry break in the whole's "perfect symmetry," the (proto-)light (*'od*), and the corporeally seen and felt pattern(s) (*sku*) as the co-evolving experiencer's infra-structure(s), inspiritingly reveal their being linked by homologous principles (principles related through their common origin), not just by analogous (formally similar) principles. Still, this does not yet explain the number twenty-one. As a matter of fact, this number seems to have had quite a history before it started to dominate the scene in the wake of fathoming Vimalamitra's thinking. The usual numbers of which the rDzogs-chen thinkers were extremely fond of as memory aids, were three, four, six, and seven, not always as distinct sets, but often as topics intertwining with one another. It would far exceed the scope of a pertinent explication of this coming face to face with one's Self (oneself) in the exegesis of this allegory. Here it must suffice to highlight some of its features. As a sort of memory aid, the number three is used in various contexts referred to as the external, the internal, and the arcane and felt as a growing and deepening process of interiorization. Or, it is used in a straightforward logical context, pointing to its Indian source, but in its detailed presentation reflects its being permeated by experience and proliferating into nine (3 x 3) images. Thus:[225]

> Coming face to face with one's Self (oneself) is of three kinds:
>
> Water, a mirror, and a crystal (describe) this encounter by way of analogies (*dpe*);

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[225] *sNang-srid kha-sbyor bdud-rtsi bcud-thigs 'khor-ba thog-mtha' gcod-pa'i rgyud phyi-ma*, 2: 254a:

> *chu dang me-long shel-sgong gsum/ dpe'i ngo-sprod*
> *chos-sku longs-sku sprul-sku gsum/ don-gi ngo-sprod*
> *sems-nyid chos-nyid rig-pa'i ye-shes gsum/ rtags-kyi ngo-sprod*

The *chos-sku*, the *longs-sku*, and the *sprul-sku* (describe) this encounter by way of the infra-structure of ones existential reality (*don*); and

Mentality-*qua*-mentality [*in*-tensity], creativity [*ex*-tensity], and the originary awareness modes as functions of the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (describe) this encounter by way of its *raison* d'être.

The number four refers to the three fore-structures (*sku*) of our existential reality and their inseparability as a fourth element.

The number six is specific to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa. Twice he uses this number with respect to the topic of one's encounter with one's Self (oneself), and each time he reveals his poetic genius. The first time he speaks of this encounter serves to clarify the distinct phases in one's growth into spiritual maturity, starting with (1) an *alētheic* vision (*lta-ba*) and proceeding through (2) a bringing to life (*sgom-pa*) what this vision holds for the experiencer, to (3) one's conducting one's life (*spyod-pa*) in what is sensed to be a magic transfiguration effected by the activation of the intrapsychic images, to (4) one's commitment (*dam-tshig*) to be exemplary, to having (5) the four-phase bestowals of strength by Being in full, resulting, if this is the right word, in the feeling of having scaled the levels of one's multilayered being and travelled the roads leading to the recovery of one's lost wholeness and integrity, and (6) to be attuned to Being's calling.[226]

The second time he uses the number six is in connection with the images illustrating one's encounter with one's Self (oneself). These images are of two kinds. "Seen" they are (1) (the triad of) a crystal, a mirror, and the rays of the sun; "felt" they are (2) a jewel (in the sense of that precious capacity that makes a wrestler overcome his opponent), (3) a sunrise, (4) the emergence of a sun-lit dimension of meanings, (5) the unitrinity of metaphor, subject matter, and *raison d'être*, and (6) the ultimacy of the (inseparability of) the dimension of meanings and its (ecstatic) cognitiveness.[227]

The number seven leads us back to Padmasambhava and his peculiar counting. For him this encounter with one's Self (oneself) and the re-cognition of what it means involves the following features[228] that, for practical purposes, allow themselves to be listed as (1) the encounter with the three

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[226] *Man-ngag rin-po-che'i mdzod*, sDe-dge ed, vol. *Cha*, fol. 19b.

[227] Ibid., fols. 49b-50a.

[228] *sPros-bral don-gsal*, 1: 28a-37a.

fore-structures of our being, (2) the encounter with the five originary awareness modes pertaining to these fore-structures, (3) the encounter with the eight perceptual patterns (involving the five sense-based patterns spread over their (triune) foundation, one's egological and egocentric mentation), (4) the encounter with (one's being) as having neither a beginning nor an end, (5) the encounter with the division of time into three phases, (6) the encounter with the encounter involving the *chos-sku*, the *longs-sku*, the *sprul-sku*, and their unbreakable coherence, and (7) the crossing the last barrier that prevents us from being what we really are.

The number twenty-one, somehow presenting the gist of Vimalamitra's thinking, has found its apogee in the writings of Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa (1308-1364) and his contemporary rGod-kyi ldem-'phru-can (1327-1386). In a small work that the latter modestly claims to have "rediscovered" from its places of hiding at Zang-zang lha-brag,[229] after having admitted his indebtedness to dGa'-rab-rdo-rje, 'Jam-dpal-bshes-gnyen, Śrīsiṁha, and Padmasambhava, he starts with the generally accepted triple (triune) encounter of an external, internal, and arcane encounter, each of which he subdivides into seven sections of a highly technical nature. This (3 x 7) formula explains the number twenty-one, and as an encounter in its own right is then summarily mentioned whenever the need for it occurs.

Encouraged by this counselling, the two blood-relatives continue running to a "stunningly wondrous shrine room"[230] and what they see is themselves as the *chos-sku* that in its own lighting-up is the approximation whole's, the whole's first closure-onto-itself's, re-discovered ultimate symbolic pregnance (*ka-dag chen-po*) in the image of the *gzhon-nu bum-pa'i sku*.[231] In this lighting-up by itself, remaining ever fresh and youthful (*gzhon-nu*) in and with its vessel-like plenitude (*bum-pa*), it is not something to be enjoyed in the future like some lusterless and opaque thing, postulational-representational thinking's deadly misconstruction. Rather, it is its (and, by implication, the blood-relatives') own lighting-up as its/their exclusive originary awareness modes in symbolic expressiveness. Paradoxi-

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229 This is the *rDzogs-pa-chen-po'i ngo-sprod nyi-shu-rtsa-gcig*. It is found in the collection of texts that goes by the name of *dGongs-pa zang-thal*, in vol. 3, pp. 555-564.

230 The Tibetan compound *bsam-rdugs* that I have rendered into English as "stunningly wondrous" is not listed in any of the available dictionaries. Its literal meaning seems to be that one's representational thinking (*bsam*) just gets bogged down (*rdugs*).

231 See also above p. 89 note 200.

cally speaking, the symbolic pregnance's self-reflexivity reaches out to something seemingly other than itself without, however, being caught up in its own projection.

This experience is a rather complex one and its complexity is intimated by the allegory's statement about "five persons, each holding a shield." As the unknown commentator elaborates, this complexity that nonetheless is one's simplex mentality/creativity (*in*-tensity/*ex*-tensity), involves, phenomenologically stated, five corporeally felt and seen patterns (*sku*) as the founding for five originary awareness modes (*ye-shes*) as the founded. These themselves are the founding for the five (proto-)lights (*'od*) as the founded, and as such are the founding for the dimensionality of meanings (*dbyings*) as the founded that in its unlimitedness and unbrokenness, with no center and no periphery, is a ceaseless presence. This complexity-*qua*-simplex is the (experiencer's) own supraconscious ecstatic intensity and its domain.[232] Its rays of light spread into the ten directions of the compass and this lighting is the unity of the (anthropocosmic) whole's emergence of its own most unique ability-to be (*rang-bzhin*) and the invariance of the "stuff" (*ngo-bo*) of what it is made.

It is these five persons that "guard the (shrine room's) door so that no (outsider) can enter." From what has been said so far, the meaning is clear. Left alone, this ecstatic intensity's originary awareness mode is not subject to and cannot be assailed by birth and death, events that pertain to the "outside" with which this "innermost" interiority is conceived or, rather misconceived, in a contrasting and static-reductionist manner. From the perspective of its dynamic and lived-through experience, this lonely ecstatic intensity's originary awareness mode is an "in-between phase" (*bar-do*) in which its self-regenerative and self-reorganizing quality manifests itself and is felt in its aliveness.

Its re-emergence from its "in-between" isolation is described in the two concluding statements in this allegory. The first statement laconically says that this coming face to face with one's Self (oneself) occurs through "looking at (one's) face in four mirrors." The unknown commentator is of

[232] *dbyings-rig*. In the impersonal jargon of modern science: the field and its excitation. The above pentamerous self-symmetry can be formalistically re-stated as follows: the approximation symmetry that is Being's "perfect symmetry" in its closure onto itself "reveals" itself in its *sku* ↔ *ye-shes* ↔ *'od* ↔ *dbyings* ↔ *rig* phases.

little help in clarifying the sudden occurrence of the number four, except for emphasizing that this encounter is the originary awareness mode's lighting-up that, as has been stated over and again, as the centrality of what is a pentad of originary awareness modes, "sees" itself reflected in its other four originary awareness modes. It is Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa who, apart from re-emphasizing the innermost quality of this experience within one's existential reality as being knowable only by one's Self (oneself, *rang-rig*), relates the four originary awareness modes to four lamps (*sgron-ma*), not so much as gadgets, but as lightings that have been succinctly stated by Padmasambhava:[233]

> Here, lamps [i.e.. lightings] are of four kinds:
> Radiating by itself — the mentality-*qua*-mentality's lamp/lighting,
> Understanding — the originary awareness mode's lamp/lighting,
> Self-originated — the disposition-to-glow's lamp/lighting,
> Core intensity — the creativity's lamp/lighting.

However intense they may be, these lightings merely offer a foretaste of that certainty which, rather than expressing a correlation between the perceiving and the perceived, is the certainty that understands whatever presences as an "as" in its being a hermeneutical challenge. To judge it as being a this or that would be an instance of the apophantic thinking's hubris, as the unknown commentator boldly states.

The hermeneutical challenge and what it carries with it, is summed up in the second and concluding statement about the blood-relatives' "breaking out in laughter after having seen the one room having eight doors." The "one room" is the blood-relatives themselves *sub specie* the *rig-pa'i ye-shes* in their/its locale, the "one room." What they "see" is, as Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa elaborates elsewhere,[234] the certainty and truth in the sense of *alētheia*, of (1) the "as" in its sensed (proto-)light (*'od-ltar*) diffracted in

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[233] *rGyud thams-cad-kyi rgyal-po Nyi-zla'i snying-po'od-'bar-ba bdud-rtsi rgya-mtsho'khyil-ba*, 3: 43b:

> *de-la sgron-ma rnam-pa bzhi*
> *rang-gsal sems-nyid-kyi sgron-ma*
> *rtogs-pa ye-shes-kyi sgron-ma*
> *rang-byung ngang-dangs-kyi sgron-ma*
> *snying-po chos-nyid-kyi sgron-ma*

[234] *Bla-ma yang-tig*, part 1, column 386 and *mKha'-'gro yang-tig*, part 2, column 102. Though identical in diction, the grouping of the basic six "as"-experiences differs. The above order is the one in his *Bla-ma yang-tig*.

five light values that encompass the whole of one's perishable world, (2) the "as" in its sensed corporeity (*sku-ltar*) divinely transfiguring one's corporeal pattern, (3) the "as" in its sensed originary awareness mode (*ye-shes-ltar*) that lets one's physical and intrapsychic dimensions be transformed into symbolic realities, (4) the "as" in its sensed non-duality (*gnyis-med-ltar*) that allows the experiencer to continue in his in-depth appraisal (of Being) with no disruptive ideas marring his quiet attending to Being's calling, (5) the "as" in its sensed dissolution of peripheral limitations (*mtha'-grol*) that makes one understand creativity's irrealizing insubstantiality (*zang-thal*), (6) the "as" in its sensed suprasensual concern (*thugs-rje-ltar*) whose reach and range is one's heartfelt interest (*snying-rje*)[235] in the living.

In order to meet the required number eight, two "as"-experiences gates (*sgo*) are added. The one opens into the realm of the symbolic-aesthetic (*dag-pa*), reductionistically spoken of as nirvana, the other opens into the realm of the dull and opaque (*ma-dag-pa*), equally reductionistically equated with samsara that yet vividly describes an ordinary, unimaginative person's "running around in circles."

Although according to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa the purport of this allegory is primarily to illustrate man's, the ubiquitous experiencer's "going down" and astray into frustrating situations, it ends with his "going up again" into what he has been all along and recognizing himself as being his supraconscious ecstatic intensity in originary awareness modes that because of this ecstasis (ek-stasis) is neither autistic nor solipsistic. This irrepressible ecstasis explodes in laughter. Not only does this final remark in the allegory attest to the positive character of Buddhism and of rDzogs-chen thought in particular, it also reveals a profound psychological insight. Only a person who has come face to face with his Self (himself) and recognizes himself as what he is, who is "awake" (*buddha*) and "free/freed" (*grol*) from all shackles because he has discerned their irreality, can laugh uncon-

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[235] Both *thugs-rje* and *snying-rje* are renderings of the Sanskrit word *karuṇā* that fails to bring out what Martin Heidegger has called the "ontological difference," so patently present in the Tibetan terms. The widespread translation of *karuṇā* by "compassion" savors too much of a cheap sentimentality as to capture the word's intrinsic and positive meaning. The existentialists' notion of care and of *Sorge* (in German) reflects Søren Kierkegard's pessimism and is just as inapproriate. The German word *Herzlichkeit* comes etymologically closest to it (*Herz* : *snying*).

strainedly.[236] The upshot of the reference to four lamps/lightings and one room with eight (6 interrelated + 2 opposite) doors is the recognition of Man/human's paradoxical "nature" of being an internal and an external "reality" on its way to transcending itself without falling into the trap of another thingified figment of his ratiocination.

The third allegory is roughly based on the same priciple as the second one, except for the fact that it has a kind of preamble that informs us that we are already deep "down" in samsara, but not yet deep enough to come face to face with one's Self (oneself) and by its recognition to move "up again." From among the eight allegories chosen by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, this is the longest and most dramatic one. It has this to say:[237]

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[236] It is interesting to note that already in early Buddhism handed down in the Pali canon, "laughter" is mentioned as a thoroughly human quality and capacity. The Pali verb *hasati* combines in itself two verbs: *hasati* "to laugh" and *hṛṣyati* "to be excited." If "laughter" is what distinguishes a human being from other beings, why is it that "saints" and their Buddhist counterparts, the Arhats, never laugh and have a face so frigid and hard that one could drive a nail into a wall with it?

[237] *Theg-mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod*, (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, chapter X, fols. 163a-165b; Ati, volume 1, columns 567-576:

> *yang yul 'khor-yug-chen-mo zhes-bya-ba-na/ 'dam-rdzab chen-po gcig-gi nang-na mar-me gcig ma-shi-bar 'dug-pas/ yul mdangs-dang-ldan-pa zhes-bya-ba-na/ ston-pa me-long-can zhes-bya-bas mthong ste/ de-la 'di-skad ces smras-so// kye sems-can mdangs-dang-ldan-pa khyod nyon cig/ ngas khyod-la lung bstan-no// ma-yengs-par nyon-cig*
>
> *ri-bo-chen-po ma-la-ya zhes-bya-ba'i rtse-mo-na/ rgya-mtsho mu-khyud-can zhes-bya-ba-na/ de'i nang-na yab 'od-srung zhes-bya-ba dang/ yum rdo-rje-phag-mo zhes-bya-ba gnyis bshos-pa-las/ ming-sring gnyis byung ste/ de-nas pha-ma gnyis-kyis ming-sring gnyis-la 'di-skad ces zer-ro// bu khyod song-la bdud-nag-po'i yul-nas me slong-la shog cig/ bu-mo khyod song-la sum-cu-rtsa-gsum lha'i yul rnam-par-rgyal-ba'i khang-bzang-nas me-tog thus-la shog cig byas-pas/ bu na-re mi 'gro zer-ro// de-nas pha-ma gnyis na-re/ bu khyod mi-'gro-ba ci ste byas-pas/ bu na-re bdud-kyi yul-na bdud ha-li-ka-nag-po zhes-bya-ba gcig yod-pas/ bdag btson-du bzung-nas 'gro zer-bas/ yang pha-ma gnyis na-re 'di-skad zer-ro// bu de-skad ma-zer-bar bdud-kyi yul-na/ a-phyi ling-tog-can zhes-bya-ba yod-kyis/ de khyod-kyi a-phyi yin-gyis/ de-la me slong-la shog byas-pas/ bu na-re 'di-skad zer-ro// kye yab-yum bdag-gi yul de ma-lags te/ yul der bdag mchi-yis/ bdag-la g.yog-po mi-lnga thong zhig/ til-mar-gyis ngar-bdud-pa'i ral-gyi gcig skur-cig/ me-long-lnga skur-cig byas-pas/ pha-ma gnyis dga'-nas de-ka-ltar bya'o zer-nas/ mi-lnga g.yog-tu brdangs/ me-long-lnga bskur-ro// yang bu na-re 'di-skad zer-ro// kye yab-yum bdag ni bdud-kyi yul-nas ma-thon-na/ ci-ltar bgyi zhes dris-pas/ pha-ma gnyis na-re/ yul rin-po-che'i phung-po zhes-bya-ba-na/ gdol-pa-can-gyi mi-bzhi yod kyis/ de tshe dmag-tu sgron-la/ mi-gcig-gis dmag sdus-shig/ mi-gcig-gis lcags khrol-cig/ mi-gnyis-kyi sgo chog-cig/ de-skad ces pha-ma gnyis-kyis lung bstan-nas/ bu na-re de-ltar bgyi'o zer-nas song-ba-las/ de-nas bdud ha-li-ka-nag-pos mthong ste/ 'o mi-sha-po byung-bas/ 'khor-rnams-kyis 'di*

In the country 'Khor-yug-chen-mo by name, in a huge swamp, an undying flame was burning. From his country mDangs-dang-ldan-pa by name, the teacher/revealer Me-long-can by name, spotted it and exclaimed: “Well, you people of mDangs-dang-ldan-pa, listen. I will make a prediction. Listen attentively.

On the summit of the towering Mt. Malaya by name, there is a huge lake, Mu-khyud-can by name. Inside this lake, archetypal Father 'Od-srung by name and archetypal Mother rDo-rje-phag-mo by name, had sex with each other and begat two children, a boy and a girl.

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ma-btang-bar zung zhig byas-pas/ bdud-kyi mi-lngas bzung-ngo// a-phyi ling-tog-can-gyis/ sgo lcags bcug-nas/ 'khor-rnams-la sngon 'dis nga'i bu bsad-pa yin-pas 'di ma-btang zhig byas-pas/ 'khor-rnams na-re/ de-ka-ltar bgyi'o zer-nas/ 'gro-ba'i dbang ma-byung-ngo// de-nas yang bu des 'di-skad ces byas-so// kye a-phyi bdag-gi pha-ma gnyis-kyi zhal-nas/ khyod-kyi a-phyi ling-tog-can zhe-bya-ba de bdud-kyi yul-na yod kyis/ de-nas me slong-la shog zer-ba lags-kyis/ bdag ma-bzung-bar thong byas-pas/ rgan-mos na-re khyod mi-btang-ba yin/ nga'i bu khyod-kyi phas bsad-pa yin-pas mi-btang-ngo zer-ro// de-nas bu des 'di-skad ces byas-so// bdag mi-btang-na dmag-'dren byas-pas/ mo na-re/ khyod-rang dmag drongs zer-nas ma-thar-ro// de-nas khos mgron-po mi-gsum-la phrin btang-ba/ kye grogs-po dag/ yul rin-chen-spungs-pa zhes-bya-ba-na/ gdol-pa'i rigs-kyi mi-bzhi yod-kyis/ der khyod-kyi khye'u rig-byed btson-du bzung-bas/ dmag-dpung mang-po chos-la shog cig byas-pas kho na-re phrin bgyi'o zer-nas song-ngo// de-nas zhag-gsum-gyi nang-bar nyi-ma shar tsam-na/ dmag mang-po byung-nas sgo bcag-nas/ btson-gyi lcags bcag/ rgan-mo yul-nas bton/ mi-lnga rta dang phral/ a-phyi'i bu btson-du bzung/ 'khor-rnams ral-gris mgo bcad de bsad-do// de-nas rang-gi yul-du bros/ de-nas rang-gi yul-du phyin-pas/ sring-mos sum-cu-rtsa-gsum lha'i yul-nas/ rnam-par-rgyal-ba'i khang-bzang-nas me-tog mang-po khyer-nas byung-ba dang phrad-do// de-nas pha-ma gnyis-kyis ngo-shes-nas rab-tu dga'-bas/ ming-sring gnyis-la ming btags-pa/ ming-po rdo-rje-lu-gu-rgyud-'dren-pa zhes-bya-ba btags-so// sring-mo'i ming ni mu-khyud-'dzin zhes-bya-ba btags-so// de-nas ming-sring gnyis gros byas-pa/ ston-pa me-long-can zhes-bya-ba de mthong-nas/ de gnyis-la lung bstan-pa/ kye rigs-kyi bu nyon-cig/ yul ma-bkod-par snang-ba-na/ rin-chen shel-gyi mchod-rten/ khri-'phang-lnga-pa gcig-la/ logs re-re-la mi-lnga-lnga mdun-ma byed-pas shel-gyi mchod-rten de'i 'khor-lo-la/ dngul dkar-gyi me-long bzhi btags-nas yod-pa/ de-la ri-bo ma-la-ya'i rtse-mo-nas bya-ra gyis-la/ mu-khyud-kyi ra-bar chug cig/ de-la rin-po-che'i skas tshugs-la/ lag-tu rin-po-che'i snod-bcud-kyis bkang-ba cig thogs-la 'dzegs-shig/ de-nas mchod-rten-gyi rtse-nas/ ston-pa 'od-mi-'gyur-ba zhes-bya-ba cig yod-kyis/ de-las 'od-zer-gyi nyag-thag cig zhabs g.yas-pa-nas 'ong-gis de-la khyod ma-'jigs-par de-la 'jus-la song-zhig/ de ni khyod rang-gi snang-ba'i yab yin-gyis der rgyug-cig/ de 'das-pa'i gong-na rin-po-che shel-gyi khang-pa gcig-la sgo-brgyad yod-kyis/ de-na khyod-kyi ma sna-tshogs-su snang-ba bya-ba yod-kyis/ de-nas khyod-kyis ma ngo-shes-par 'gyur-ro// de'i gong-na rin-po-che sna-tshogs-las byas-pa'i khang-pa yod-kyis/ de khyod-kyi gnas yin-pas der sa zung-zhig/ de-skad ces ston-pas lung bstan-pas/ khye'u lu-gu-rgyud-'dren-pas 'di-skad ces bya'o// kye ston-pa chen-po de-ltar bdag-gis bgyi'o// zer-nas sring-mo-la 'di-skad ces zer-ro// ston-pas lung bstan-pa bzhin-du bya'o zer-nas/ nyi-ma'i zer-la rta-ru zhon-nas/ 'ja'-tshon-gyi sga bstad-nas/ mu-tig-gi phreng-bas glo bsdams-nas lag-tu shel-gyi mdung thung thogs-nas/ nam-mkha'i dkyil-du lam phyung-nas/ rin-po-che'i khang-pa'i nang-na thog-rdugs med-par song zer-te ya-cha

In course of time the two parents told their two children: “Well, (dear) son, you go and from the country of the Black Demon bring back the [hidden] fire, and you, dear daughter, go and bring the flowers you have gathered from the rNam-par-rgyal-ba palace (in) the country of the Thirty-three gods. The son retorted: “I am not going.” His parents remonstrated: “What do you mean by saying that you will not go?” The son explained: “In this demon country there lives the demon Ha-li-ka nag-po; he is going to imprison me.” Again his parents pleaded: “Well, do not say so; in this demon country there lives grandmother Ling-tog-can by name. She is your grandmother, ask her for the fire.” The son declared: “Well, honorable father and mother, [the country to which you will send me] is not my country. If I go there, send with me five servants, each carrying a sword tempered in sesame oil, and a mirror.” His parents were delighted and, when they had said that they would do so, they appointed five men to be their son’s servants and equipped them with five (swords and) mirrors. The son once again asked: “Well, honorable father and mother, if I cannot get out of this demon country, what am I to do?” His parents told him: “In the country Rin-po-che'i phung-po by name, there live four persons belonging to the caste of butchers and scavengers. Call them up to form your army. One will muster an army; another will loosen the shackles; and two will smash the (prison) door.” When in so many words the parents had counselled (him what to do), the son declared: “I shall do so,” and with the words “Alas! Alas!” went away.

Then (it so happened that) the demon Ha-li-ka nag-po espied them and exclaimed: “Ha, human flesh has come our way,” and ordered his attendants to take them and not let them go. Five demons grabbed them. Grandmother Ling-tog-can put (the legs of the prisoners) into irons and told the demon attendants: “These people have formerly killed my children. Don’t let them go.” The attendants said: “We will do so,” and there was no chance of escape. Then the youth said: “Well, grandmother, my parents told me that my grandmother Ling-tog-can by name lived in demon country and I should ask her for the [hidden] fire. So, do not hold me (prisoner), but let me go.” The old woman replied: “I am not letting you go. Your father has killed my children. Therefore, I shall not let you go.” Then, again, the youth said: “If you do not let me go, I shall raise an army.” The old woman retorted: “Raise an army, I will not let you go.” Thereafter, the youth handed a letter to three passers-by whom he told: “Friends, in the country Rin-po-che-spungs-pa by name, there live four persons belonging to the caste of butchers and scavengers. Go there and tell them that their inspiriting youngster is held prisoner and that they should instantly raise a huge army.” With the words: “We will do so, as the letter says,” they went on their way. Then, within three days, just when the sun had risen, many soldiers arrived, smashed the (prison) door, unshackled the prisoners, banished the old woman, unhorsed five riders, put the grandmother’s children into prison, and decapited the (demon) attendants. Then and there the youngster ran to his home country. Arriving there he met his sister who had gathered

> many flowers from the rNam-par-rgyal-ba palace in the country of the Thirty-three gods.
>
> Thereafter, the two parents (of the boy and the girl) were overjoyed in recognizing what (their offspring had achieved) and conferred titles on them. The son was given the title rDo-rje-lu-gu-rgyud-'dren-pa, and the daughter was given the title Mu-khyud-'dzin.
>
> Afterwards brother and sister talked to each other about visiting the teacher/revealer Me-long-can who gave them this instruction:
>
> "Hi! Children of high standing, listen. In the country Ma-bkod-par-snang-ba by name, there stands a five-tiered precious crystal *mchod-rten*. On each side five persons have positioned themselves in the fore-front and have placed four mirrors of purest silver at the circumference of this crystal *mchod-rten*. Look at this from the peak of Mt. Malaya and (then) enter its enclosure. Once inside, climb up to the top-landing of a jewelled staircase whilst holding in your hands a bowl filled with what is the (physical world) as a container and the (living beings) as the elixir in it. There, on top of the *mchod-rten* resides the teacher/revealer 'Od-mi-'gyur-ba. From his right foot a rope of light rays extends. Be not afraid of it, but hold on to it. He is the archetypal father of your (very) lighting-up. Rush up to him. Beyond and above him is a precious crystal room with eight doors. In it resides your mother sNa-tshogs-su-snang-ba. Recognize her as your mother. Still higher up there is room made of many jewels. That is your (legitimite) home. Firmly settle in it."
>
> With this instruction by the teacher/revealer (in mind), the youngster rDo-rje-lu-gu-rgyud-'dren-pa said: "So be it. Hi! great teacher/revealer, I shall do (as you have predicted)," and to his sister he said: "Well, let us do what the teacher/revealer has told us." Having mounted the rays of the sun as their horses, seated themselves on the rainbow as the saddle, tightened a string of pearls as the girth, holding a short crystal dagger in their hands, they rode without any hindrances over the sky's orb as their way into their precious home. How wonderful!

Although the preamble to this allegory starts with a presentation of the ubiquitous experiencer's dismal situatedness in samsara, its overall tenor is that of light by which both Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa (in his glosses) and the unknown commentator of the *Rig-pa rang-shar* (from which this allegory has been taken) have been fascinated. It is the latter author who is most explicit in elucidating the deeper meaning of this allegory, while Klong-chen-ra-'byams-pa, though to the point, is often laconic. In the description of this situation of what we would call our interpreted physical world, there is even a progressive closing-in onto itself detectable. There is first and foremost the "country 'Khor-yug-chen-mo by name" that in Indian mythology is the name for the nine mountain ranges encircling the

earth with Mt. Meru as the central mountain. Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa laconically states that this country and its name just mean samsara, while the unknown commentator specifies this locale as the countless sentient beings who make up the six kinds of the living and within themselves carry the whole's (Being's) core intensity as a seed. Then there is a further closure, the "huge swamp," explicated by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa as the triad of what is traditionally referred to as body, speech, and mind and considered to be the within of the environing world, while the unknown commentator conceives of it as the hub of the unimaginable welter of instinctive-affective and mental-intellectual pollutants. With respect to the "undying flame," both authors agree in understanding it as the originary awareness mode(s) as functions of the supraconscious ecstatic intensity. However, to be precise, the Tibetan word that I here have briefly rendered by "flame," is *mar-me*. Usually, on the basis of its being used in connection with offerings made in religious ceremonies, it is concretistically translated as "butter lamp" and given a materialistic twist. Nothing could be farther from its luminous, "fiery" character in the present allegorical context. Actually, there is, in addition, a subtle play of words concerning this fire/flame (*me*) involved: the *mar-me* "the fire/flame (nourished) by melted butter or oil," the *me-long* "the mirror as a revealer, rather than as a reflector" who gives the teacher/revealer his name Me-long-can, and the *me slong* "asking for the fire/flame." It is the image of a mirror that by its capacity to reveal, in a deeper sense, to let the hidden light, the inner fire, shine forth, that has found a welter of interpretations, presented numerically. This is its assessment as external, internal, and arcane with each aspect having three facets, resulting in "nine mirrors."[238]

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[238] Thus Padmasambhava declares in his *sNang-srid kha-sbyor bdud-rtsi bcud-'thigs 'khor-ba thog-mtha' gcod-pa'i rgyud* (Taipei ed., vol. 55, p. 584, column 6); sDe-dge edition 2: 255a:

> *snang-ba rang-gnas me-long dang*
> *rig-pa rang-shar me-long dang*
> *kun-gzhi spros-bral me-long ste*
> *de ni phyi-yi me-long-ngo*
>
> *nang-gi me-long bstan-pa ni*
> *snang-ba brtags-snang me-long dang*
> *rig-pa stong-pa'i me-long dang*
> *kun-gzhi sems-kyi me-long-ngo*
> *gsang-ba'i me-long bstan-pa ni*
> *snang-ba sems-kyi me-long dang*
> *yid-rig 'gyu-med me-long dang*

Even more intriguing is the name of the teacher/revealer Me-long-can's country, mDangs-dang-ldan-pa "Endowed with an inner glow."[239] It is explicated by the unknown commentator as the starting point when the originary awareness mode(s) as functions of the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa'i ye-shes*), having been intruded and contaminated by a less intense and rather unexcitated cognitive mode (*ma-rig-pa*), goes astray into what is deemed to be the mass of the sediments of previous low-intensity experiences as possible future low-intensity experiences that have to be recognized as what they are with the help of the lamp of the visionary experiencer's discriminative-appreciative acumen according to the teacher/

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snying-po'i don de rab-rtogs-pa
skye-med sems-kyi me-long-ngo

The mirror (that is) the phenomenal in its thereness,
The mirror (that is Being's) ecstatic intensity in its self-manifestation,
The mirror (that is one's) ontic foundation as divested of thematic limitations.
This is the mirror in its external aspect.

The mirror in its internal aspect is (as follows):
The mirror (that is) the postulational in its lighting-up,
The mirror (that is Being's) ecstatic intensity in its voiding,
The mirror (that is one's) ontic foundation as (one's) mentation.

The mirror in its arcane aspect is (as follows):
The mirror (that is the inseparability of) the phenomenal and mentation,
The mirror (that is) the egological mind and the ecstatic intensity in their immobility,
The mirror (that is) the birthless as mentality (in the sense that it is)
The thorough understanding of (one's) existential reality (that is Being's) core intensity.

Attention to the third line in the second stanza explains Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's almost unintelligible statement about the teacher/revealer Me-long-(can) as *stong* "voiding" and its elaboration as his very own self-originated lamp of discriminative-appreciative acumen.

Although going into details concerning the idea and the function of the mirror would far exceed the scope of the above preamble, two important works should be mentioned. The one is Padmasambhava's *lTa-ba la-shan chen-po sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 1: 109a-117a, dealing on fol. 115a with the mirror in connection with three phases of coming face to face with one's Self (oneself). The other is the *Nor-bu rin-po-che 'od-'bar-ba'i rgyud* (Taipei ed., vol. 55, pp. 404, column 1 to 405 column 1), ascribed to the enigmatic dGa'-rab-rdo-rje (Jesus figure) to whom Vimalamitra felt attracted. It deals with six mirrors in connection with one's coming face to face with one's Self (oneself).

[239] There are two Tibetan terms: *mdangs* and *gdangs*. The former denotes an "inner isotropic glow," the latter an outward-directed glow. As Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa elaborates in his *mKha'-yang*, vol. 2, columns 227f., this inner isotropic glow is threefold in the sense that it develops into three probability structures (*sku*) that together form a co-ordinated hierarchy.

revealer's prediction. Where does this contaminating intrusion come from? The answer is that it comes from the ecstatic intensity's functionality that manifests itself as an "in-between" (*bar-do*) or, as we might say, a phase transition from a sheer brilliance, invariant and stable (though not static), on the one hand, to an instability phase that causes its wearing itself out in creating a multitude of "things" that become increasingly lusterless,[240] on the other hand. As we shall see later, this "in-between" works both ways: "down" and "up again." To anyone familiar with Gnostic cosmogony, the above tripartite conception of the anthropocosmic universe is strikingly similar.

The allegory now sets out the details of Man/human's going "down" and astray and his/her eventual going "up again." There is, first of all, a certain spatial element that is both cosmic and anthropic. This is indicated by the statement that "on the summit of the towering Mt. Malaya by name, there is a huge lake, Mu-khyud-can by name." In Indian mythology, Mt. Malaya is famous for its medicinal trees and herbs, its fragrant sandal wood trees, and its snakes guarding these treasures. Here, however, it is conceived of as a person's body and, in particular, as his heart in which his *rig-pa* ("spiritual excitability") resides, while its inner dynamic, its *in*-formation (about how it goes with it, *thig-le*) in the person's brain resides as a lamp that is the spiritual excitability's originary awareness mode(s) (*ye-shes*). Located in the person's head, this lamp becomes his eyes that as lamps spread their light into what is their dimensionality, the sky/*spatium*, in the brilliance of an *Urwissen* (*ye-shes-kyi 'od*) that as rays of light from the spiritual excitability now arise as the capacity to be originarily aware, which is the person's own most unique ability-to be (*rang-bzhin*).

As the allegory continues, there is on the summit of this mountain "a huge lake, Mu-khyud-can by name." Regrettably, neither commentator says anything further. However, the context provides some possible clues. There is, on the cosmic level, the contrast between the solidity of the mountain and the fluidity of the lake, while, on the anthropic level, there is the contrast between the calm heart and the agile brain. Since, furthermore, the

[240] Traditionally four "in-between" states have been listed. But their number oscillates between six (*Nor-bu rin-po-che 'od-'bar-ba'i rgyud*, loc.cit., columns 5-6) and ten (*lTa-ba la-shan chen-po sgron-ma rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 1: 116b), thus again highlighting the ubiquitous visionary/ experiencer and his interpretations of these "in-between" states that turn out to be lived-through phase transitions.

allegory moves in a dimension that I have called Being's closure-onto itself, both cosmically and anthropically, the name of this lake, Mu-khyud-can, gains added significance. The literal meaning is "having a rim." Elsewhere,[241] this rim is said to be of a virtual or (proto-)light that, in connection with the teacher/revealer's corporeally seen and felt *Gestalt* (*sku*), allows us to speak of it as a halo, which together with the mirror image calls to mind the Gnostic statements that "He sees Himself, as in a mirror," and "understands Himself in His own light that surrounds Him, that is, the source of the waters of life, the light of full purity."[242]

In this lake/halo/mirror the teacher/revealer sees himself as archetyal "Father" (*yab*) 'Od-srung by name, having sex with archetypal "Mother" (*yum)* rDo-rje-phag-mo by name and, consequently having two children, a son and a daughter who, interestingly, have as yet no names. The "Father's" name, literally rendered into English as "Guardian of Light," reemphasizes the allegory's overall tenor of luminosity and luminescence. As the unknown commentator elaborates, as 'Od-srung ("Guardian of Light") he is the supraconscious ecstatic intensity/spiritual excitability turned a corporeity (*rig-pa'i sku*) as a virtual light *('od*), endless (infinite) as well as irreducible (infinitesimal small), carrying with it the light that is the originary awareness (modes), and still cannot be concretized as having some directionality. About the "Mother" he says that she is (Being's) creativity (*chos-nyid*), Kun-tu-bzang-mo ("Goodness *par excellence*"), having risen on her own and spreading far and wide by virtue of her luminosity such that, in partaking of the effectiveness (*thabs*) principle, she lights-up as a virtual (proto-)light (*'od*) and, in partaking of the discrimination-appreciation (*shes-rab*) principle, she lights-up as the originary awareness mode(s) (*ye-shes*). Their combined lighting-up is the visionary's objectively experienced meaning-structure of his being (*chos-sku*) as the "feeling" of utter happiness and bliss (*bde-ba-chen-po*). The fact that neither commentator expatiates on the "Mother's" name rDo-rje-phag-mo, raises the suspicion that this name was introduced into the text in order to curry favor with the Mongol (Yüan) dynasty that was to dominate Tibet's affairs for nearly a

[241] In the *Seng-ge rtsal-rdzogs chen-po'i rgyud* (in Ati, volume 2, columns 266 and 317) we find the compound *'od-kyi mu-khyud*. On its roundness (*zlum-po*) and overall brightness, see ibid., column 355.

[242] These quotations from the Berlin Gnostic Codex 8502 are discussed at length by Giovanni Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism,* p. 63.

century. According to legend, one of this loosely-knit dynasty's warriors was so deeply impressed by what seemed to have been a miracle performed by the abbess of bSam-lding, believed to be an incarnation of the rDo-rje-phag-mo (Skt. Vajra-varāhī), that he became a convert and patron. Since there is no cogent reason to doubt Vimalamitra's authorship of the *Rig-pa rang-shar*, it is more than likely that the "Mother's" name was 'Od-zer-can-ma (Skt. Marīcī) "Of the nature of rays of light." Her relationship with the rDo-rje-Varāhī (Diamond Sow) is iconographically born out by her carriage consisting of seven sows.[243]

This emphasis on light is again noticeable in the description of the two children of the archetypal Father and Mother (*yab-yum*) turned, as it were, "real" parents (*pha-ma*) in whom the efficiency principle and the discrimination-appreciation principle have not ceased to be operative. Their son and daughter are described as "lamps," always in the sense of throwing light on what they create. The son-*qua*-lamp is designated as the *dbyings rnam-par-dag-pa'i sgron-ma*. This technical designation may be paraphrased as "the lamp that is a dimensionality (rich in) symbolic forms" with emphasis on the dimensionality (*dbyings*) that does not necessarily involve an understanding of what its symbolic forms mean and are likely to be misconstrued as exemplifying another subject-object dichotomy noted for its lack of luster in spite of its constructs spreading like wildfire, its being on the brink of dying with each new construct, and its being a contradiction as well as a forgetfulness of what is meant by a lamp. Hence, his parents send him to the realm of the Black Demon, the territory of unexcitability (*ma-rig-pa*) to ask for and bring back the undying fire (*me*) that is the excitability/spiritual intensity (*rig-pa*), hidden and held captive there. The daughter *qua*-lamp is designated as the *thig-le stong-pa'i sgron-ma* and its character is *rig-*(*pa*). Her/its technical designation may be paraphrased as "the lamp that is (Being's) *in*-formation/(self-)organization dynamic as no-thing (nothing)."[244] She/it is sent to gather a flower from the rNam-par-

[243] For details about her see Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, pp. 132-134.

[244] In this technical expression the term *stong-pa* is the most difficult to understand. Unlike its Sanskrit equivalent *śūnya* which is an adjective, the Tibetan term has a verbal connotation. Therefore it does not mean "empty," but "voiding" in the Whiteheadian sense of "not allowing permanent structures to persist." The now obsolete German verb *nichten* captures the meaning of the Tibetan *stong*.

rgyal-ba palace in the realm of the Thirty-three Gods.[245] The unknown commentator explicates the name of this palace to the effect that what is *rig-pa* and what is *ye-shes* is ambivalent as to their maturation or non-maturation into a unitary experience, but that in their felt experience one sees the *ye-shes* as a corporeal pattern (*sku*) as well as a (proto-)light (*'od*). The flower is, according to him, the *rang-rig*, "the excitation (ecstatic intensity) that can be known only by the visionary experiencer himself and does not depend on something other than itself." In passing it may be pointed out that at the beginning of the quest for wholeness the situation of the concerned persons is one of fragmentation and relative isolation as intimated by the "triad" of the *sku,* the *ye-shes,* and the '*od* in contrast with the *rang-rig*.[246]

Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa interprets the parents' ordering their children to go to different countries as meaning that the wealth the *dbyings* has to offer must be directly sampled like things in a bazaar, and that the *thig-le* must extract what is nutricious. In this rather laconic statement he seems to anticipate the unitary experience that is the purpose of the quest.

However, the son is obstinate and refuses to go. He is, according to Kong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, a bit of a dunce and as a novice still engrossed in the phenomenal, which is the first thing that has to be cleared up and away. For, as long as this preoccupation persists, the *rang-rig* is caught in the clutches of the subject-object dichotomy demon.

In order to overcome their son's obstinacy and reluctance to go into a dangerous territory, his parents appeal to his sense of obligation to his family's ancestry by pointing out that in the Black Demon's country there lives his half-blind grandmother, Ling-tog-can, and that he has to recognize her, the very low-level of excitability (*ma-rig-pa*), as the complementary and co-existent aspect of his high-level excitability/excitation (*rig-pa*), which is all the more reason to ask her for the fire that will make the excitability they share shine forth. The son yields to his parents' request, but demands

[245] In Indian mythology the realm of the Thirty-three Gods, presided over by Indra/Śakra, is located on the summit of the world-mountain Mt. Meru. According to the *Abhidharmakośa* III 65, the name of this palace is Vaijayanta. rNam-par-rgyal-ba is its literal Tibetan translation.

[246] This is clearly stated in the *Chos thams-cad-kyi don bstan-pa rdzogs-chen thig-le-nyag-gcig ye-nas bya-btsal bral-la*, 25: 111b. This text has various titles and subtitles and seems to have been compiled by rDo-rje gling-pa (1376-1405).

that five servants, signifying five originary awareness modes, accompany him, each carrying a sword and a mirror. The parents are overjoyed and acceed to their son's request. Before the son sets out on his quest he asks his parents what to do when he and his companions are taken prisoners in the Black Demon's country. His parents tell him that "in the country Rin-po-che'i phung-po ("Precious Conglomerate") by name," an allusion to the visionary experiencer's psychophysical body imaged as *tsitta*,[247] there are "four individuals belonging to the caste of butchers and scavengers." As these four individuals are actually lamps (*sgron-ma*) themselves and as such discriminative-appreciative acumen (*shes-rab*) aspects, he will have to contact them to muster a relief army. One of them, appropriately called *sdud-byed-kyi shes-rab* ("gathering acumen") will collect the necessary forces, another one, appropriately called '*byed-byed-kyi shes-rab* (differentiating acumen") will loosen the prisoners' shackles, and two other ones, appropriately called *sgrol-byed-kyi shes-rab* ("liberating (setting free) acumen") and *gcod-byed-kyi shes-rab* ("cutting (finalizing) acumen") will smash the (prison) door. Thus encouraged, the son departs and is promptly spotted by the Black Demon Halika nag-po ("black aconite"), the principal instinctive-affective pollutant in an individual's make-up, who orders his ruffians, the remaining pollutants, to take the youngster and his companions prisoner and not let them escape. To make matters worse and to ensure that no escape is possible, "grandmother" Ling-tog-can by name, puts shackles on the captives' legs. Although the text of the allegory does not say anything about the relationship between Halika nag-po and Ling-tog-can, it is safe to assume that these two exemplify the complementarity principle, so characteristic of rDzogs-chen thinking, in the mythopoetic language of a man and a woman. From our (Western) point of view, there is even a slight slur perceptible when in the commentaries Halika nag-po is declared just to be a prominent "pollutant" (*nyon-mongs*) and Ling-tog-can is declared to be a "not-quite excitability/excitation" (*ma-rig-pa*) and as such has some *rig-pa* (that in the youngster is highly developed). Because of this common bond, the youngster appeals to her by addressing her as "grandmother." But she scorns him and, when he threatens to call in an army, she mockingly tells

[247] Although this term is, linguistically speaking, the Tibetan spelling of the Sanskrit term *citta*, it pertains to Man/human's imaginal dimension and hence is neither physical nor mental, even if its "location" is said to be the "heart." Even our word "heart" has, except to the rankest reductionist, many meanings. See Stephan Strasser, *The Phenomenology of Feeling*, particularly, Robert E. Wood's *Introduction* to this work and the chart on p. 10.

him to go ahead. It now happens that three passers-by turn up. They are the three sections of the Buddhist Canon, the Sutras (sermons), the Vinaya (disciplinary rules), and the Abhidharma (psychological-philosophical topics). They are "passers-by," not absolutes as claimed by dogmatists. Their purpose is that we learn from them to proceed since what is called the Way (*lam*, Skt. *mārga)* is the going, not a remaining "stuck" with some thingified goal. The youngster asks them to convey his captivity to the four "butchers and scavengers," which, of course, they do. The deeper meaning of the youngster's meeting with three passers-by and their conveying his message is that what he has learned from the Buddhist Canon rouses his discriminative-appreciative acumen leading to his understanding of himself and his situatedness. This understanding is a process that, in modern mathematical diction, involves three phase spaces, each phase space, in the allegory's language, likened to a twenty-four hour period and, in its evocative imagery, marking the felt and seen onset of a sunrise. The first phase space is described in terms of smashing the (prison) door, meaning that the representational thinking's figment of a physical body is removed so that originary awareness modes can enter; the second phase space is described as the breaking the chains and shackles, meaning that they are taken off; and the third phase space is described as the expulsion of the old woman from the country where she has lived all the time, meaning that the low-level, "not quite the (optimal) excitability/excitation" (*ma-rig-pa*) is eradicated. A corollary of these primary phase spaces is the unseating of the five riders on their horses, the (individual's) mere instinctivity (*Triebhaftigkeit*), the putting "grandmother's" children into prison, meaning the dissolution of *ma-rig-pa* into *rig-pa*, and the decapitation of the entourage, the "eighty-four thousand pollutants," of the old woman and her spouse, with the sword of (one's) critical acumen.

The above elucidation of what "understanding" means is, as both commentators state, though in different words, an eye-openener. The youngster now "sees" and, in seeing, creates the road along which he runs home. Once at home, he meets his sister who has brought back many flowers from the rNam-par-rgyal-ba palace in the realm of the Thirty-three Gods.[248]

[248] The unknown commentator explicates the realm of the Thirty-three Gods as the experience of lamps (*sgron-ma nyams-su blang*) and the *me* in the *me-tog* "flower(s)" as the measure (limit) of the asking for the fire (*longs-pa'i tshad*).

The parents are overjoyed in seeing their children safely home again and in recognizing in them the (re-)transformation of what had been their *ye-shes* into what was their *rig-pa*. As a consequence of this recognition, the parents now confer on them, who each are a "lamp" (*sgron-ma*), a title. The son's title is rDo-rje-lu-gu-rgyud-'dren-pa "Adamantine Leader of coherent impulses,"[249] and the daughter's title is Mu-khyud-'dzin "She who beholds and is beheld by the halo."[250] When according to the unknown commentator the son is said to present the *dbyings-rig-pa'i sgron-ma* and

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[249] This paraphrase is prompted by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's exegesis of the phrase *rdo-rje lu-gu-rgyud* in his *Theg-pa'i mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod*, (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, fol. 314b):

> *rdo-rje ni sangs-rgyas sems-can kun-la ngo-bo bzang-ngan-med-par mnyam-zhing mi-'gyur-bar gnas-pa'i cha-nas bzhag-la/ lu ni dper-na chu'i lum bzang-po-las chu 'phel-'grib-med-par 'byung-ba dang 'dra-bar/ sku dang ye-shes-kyi 'phel-sgo sna-tshogs-su lam-snang ma-rdzogs-kyi bar-la de-las 'char-bar byed-pa'o// gu ni de-nyid-kyi nang-du chos-nyid phyin-ci-ma-log-pa'i lta-ba dang sgom-pa 'gugs-par byed-la/ rgyud ni 'khor-'das-la khyab-cing snang-ba de'i tshogs-rnams-las/ sku dang thig-le' phro-ba dang/ mched-pa dang/ 'du-ba la-sogs-pa gsal-bar byed-pa'o*

> *rdo-rje* is spoken of here in view of the fact that (what is the) "stuff" of which the totality of the *erlichtet* (spiritually alight) ones and the mentation-(bound) ones (is made of) abides self-same and invariant with neither good nor evil affecting it; *lu* (is spoken of here in view of the fact that) it opens various doors for (experiencing) the proliferations of corporeal patterns (as the founding) and originary awareness modes (as the founded), as long as the going-the-way has not been ended, in (this "stuff"), similar to the welling-up of waves, neither increasing nor decreasing (as to their water content), from a calm lake; *gu* (is spoken of here in view of the fact) that the creativity in this ("stuff") evokes incontrovertible visions and creative participations in them; and rgyud (is spoken of here in view of the fact) that from (this "stuff") pervasive of and lighting up samsara and nirvana, (its phenomena such as the) corporeally seen and felt patterns, the emission, spreading, and re-absorptions of the in-formation/self-organizing dynamic (of this "stuff") are made to radiate.

[250] It is important to notice the difference in terminology. The lake in which the teacher/revealer sees and "understands Himself in His own light that surrounds Him," (see above p. 114,) is called Mu-khyud-*can* "of the nature of a halo," the girl who has brought back the "flower/fire" from the realm of the Thirty-three Gods, is given the title Mu-khyud-*'dzin*. What we have to understand by this title, has been clearly stated by David Michael Levin, *The Opening of Vision*, pp. 257-258:

> To behold is to be *held* by what one sees. To behold is, in this sense, to be also beheld. Conversely, since the beheld is that which *holds* our gaze — holds it, sometimes, and binds it under a spell, it is also true to say that the beheld is also the one beholding. In beholding, though, we are held not only by what we have beheld; we are held at the same time by the entire world of visibility; and ultimately, by the field of the lighting.

the daughter to present the *thig-le stong-pa'i sgron-ma*, events to follow have been subtly intimated by the use of the compound *dbyings-rig*.

Three quotations from Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's writings may serve to illustrate the two-as-one character of the *dbyings-rig*. The first one reads:[251]

> The *dbyings* and the *rig* (are such that) neither the one nor the other can be added to or subtracted from (one another); they are present in the manner of the sun and its rays.

The second one states:[252]

> The indication of (the presence of the) *dbyings* is (the vision of) a halo; the indication of (the presence of its) originary awareness modes is (the vision of) a *thig-le*; and the indication of (the presence of its) corporeally seen and felt pattern is (the experience of) a *lu-gu-rgyud*.

The third one is most elaborate:[253]

> The "stuff" of the *dbyings* and the *rig* is of two kinds [which are they?]: an external and an internal *dbyings*. The external *dbyings* is the sky [with no clouds as modifiers in it]; the internal *dbyings* is (this *dbyings*') symbolic expressiveness [like the letter symbol ◡] as a lamp.
>
> The *rig* also is of two kinds: part of this *rig-pa* [its *thig-le* aspect] is its outward-directed glow; this *rig-pa*'s [*rdo-rje-lu-gu-rgyud*] is its ownmost "stuff." In brief, the *dbyings-rig* is like the duality of a house and its owner.

With their errancy having ended in a newly won readiness to be critically and originarily aware, brother and sister in their two-as-oneness de-

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251 *mKha'-'gro yang-thig*, vol. 2, column 399:

> *de yang dbyings dang rig-pa'du-'bral-med-pa nyi-ma dang'od-zer-gyi tshul-du gnas te*

252 Ibid.:

> *de'ang dyings-kyi rtags-su'od-khyim/ ye-shes-kyi rtags-su thig-le/ sku'i rtags-su lu-gu-rgyud*

253 *Bi-ma snying-thig*, vol. 2, p. 88:

> *dbyings dang rig-pa'i ngo-bo ni/ dbyings-la rnam-pa gnyis yod de [gang zhe-na]/ phyi-yi dbyings dang nang-gi dbyings-so// phyi-yi dbyings ni [rkyen sprin dang bral-ba] nam-mkha'o// nang-dbyings rnam-dag [ste yi-ge na-ro lta-bu] sgron-ma'o//*
> *rig-pa nyid kyang gnyis yin te/ rig-pa'i cha-shas [thig-le] gdangs dang ni/ rig-pa rdo-rje lu-gu-rgyud] rang-gi ngo-bo'o// mdor-na dbyings-rig khyim dang bdag-po'i tshul rnam-pa gnyis*

Words in brackets are glosses.

cide to visit the teacher/revealer Me-long-can who now takes on the role of an "in-between" (*bar-do*)[254] phase transition in a further upward direction. He counsels them by speaking of a country "Ma-bkod-par snang-ba" by name. As a descriptor this name aptly characterizes this country as a locale that "lights up with as yet undefined borders" that Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa interprets as a visible presence, a *phainomenon* (phenomenon, a noun) in the sense of a *phainestai* (a verb).[255] There, so the teacher/revealer-*qua*-bardo continues, stands a precious crystal *mchod-rten* (spelled in English as Chorten), flawless in its transparency and translucency and having five tiers presenting five pigments, colored lights experienced as light values: white, blue, yellow, red, and green.[256] As the counselling proceeds there is

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[254] On the exact meaning of this term see Herbert Guenther, *The Teachings of Padma-sambhava*, p. 36. While in the context of the allegory the unknown commentator refers to him as meaning the *bar-do*, Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa refers to him as *bar-do dang-po'I 'od-gsal* "the brilliant light of the *bar-do* in its first (lighting-up)."

[255] The technical term *chos-nyid bar-do snang-ba* (in his gloss in the allegory given as *chos-nyid bar-do'i snang-yul*) is explicated by him in his *Theg-pa'i mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod*, (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, fol. 405a):

> *chos-nyid bar-do snang-ba ni/ phung-po bdag-'dzin-gyi rten bor-nas/ sku dang ye-shes-kyi* ***chos-nyid*** *mngon-du snang/ las dang bag-chag-kyi'brel chas-pas rang-bzhin bsam-gtan-gi* ***chos-nyid****-la longs-spyod/ dbang-po 'dzin-byed-kyi yul stongs-pas rang-snang 'od-gsal-gyi* ***chos-nyid****-la spyod-pa'o*

> The phrase *chos-nyid bar-do snang-ba* means: once the assemblage of (one's) psychophysical constituents (phung-po*)* that is the site of (one's) belief in a self, has been discarded, the creativity (that is one's) corporeity and (its) originary awareness modes becomes directly manifest; once the ties that hold one's karmic blundering and their sedimentations together, have been cut, (one can) engage (oneself) in and enjoy the creativity (that is one's) own most unique ability-to-be as the basis for thinking; and once the domain of the senses that are concerned with the belief (in concrete realities) has been voided, (one can) engage (oneself) in and enjoy the creativity that is the self-manifesting brilliance (of one's being).

In the same work, on fol, 404a, he refers to the *bar-do* as *bar-ma-do* and in its explication emphasises the "in-between," "the "middle." Its experience involving a welter of "lightings" has been detailed (with many quotations from other works) by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa in his *mKha'-'gro yang-thig*, vol. 2, columns 425-444.
This idea of a middle, an in-between, has been independently arrived at and expressed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 25:

> *Between* things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other away, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle.

[256] I have retained the Tibetan term *mchod-rten*, literally rendered "a site for worship," to preserve the charm of the teacher-revealer's presentation. The usual translation is the San-

what seems to be a constant fluctuation between the material/concrete and the imaginal/symbolic, if not to say, a demand to think simultaneously on two levels.[257] Thus, what is experienced as light values on the imaginal/ symbolic level are bunches of flowers that serve as decorations of the *mchod-rten/stūpa* on the material/concrete level. Similarly, these light values spoken of as "persons" who place four mirrors at the four points of the compass within the circle forming the circumference of the *mchod-rten*, are ways of light to guide the brother-sister pair who themselves are the central originary awareness mode/mirror linked to four other originary awareness modes/mirrors that together form a pentagonal self-symmetry. Once standing on the summit of Mt. Malaya that now becomes the brother's "eye that sees," he as *in*-tensity is to gaze at his *ex*-tensity that is the Mu-khyud dimensionality, his sister who gazes back at him. In their mutual gaze they establish an intimacy in which the old and stale dualism of the supposedly active male and the supposedly passive female, clichéd phrases, has lost all meaning. But this intimacy is not the end. Rather, it is the starting point of the "way up" that, in the allegory's poetic diction, proceeds along a jewelled staircase at the uppermost landing of which the teacher/revealer 'Od-mi-'gyur-ba "Light Invariant" (who is none else but this intimacy's self-manifestation as a lighting-up) is to be found and to whom the world as a container and the sentient beings as the elixir in it, left behind, as it were, are to be offered. As a sign of accepting this offering, the teacher/revealer 'Od-mi-'gyur-ba will let come forth a rope consisting of rays of light from what seems to the visitor(s) to be his right foot, but actually is his heart as the symbol of his spirit/spirituality. The visitors, the brother-sister intimacy, are not to be afraid of this light as it is their/its archetypal father (*yab*), the *rang-rig*. Rather, they/it should rush up to him/it who will direct them/it to a crystal room, still higher up and

skrit word stūpa that fails to convey its symbolic connotation of being an image of the Anthropos of Gnostic and Hermetic thought.

[257] Sometimes the language of the original text is helpful. For example, the text had spoken of a *rin-po-che'i phung-po* that allows itself to be translated as a "precious assemblage" or a "pile of valuables" and a *rin-chen spungs* that alows itself to be rendered as a "precious heap" or a "heap of valuables." The difference is that the *phung-po* is more of a fortuitous assemblage, while the *spungs* is more of a well organized assemblage. In modern diction, the *phung-po* as a "country" can be likened to a ghetto, the *spungs* to an estate. So also, on the material/concrete level, brother and sister are ordinary human beings (*mi*), but on the imaginal/symbolic level they are "children of high standing" (*rigs-kyi bu*), where *rigs* refers to some social status as well as to the concrete *phung-po* as "resonance domains."

beyond. It has the (by now familiar) eight doors.[258] In this room there lives the sNa-tshogs-su-snang-ba "She who lights-up in a multiplicity (of luminescences)" who is the intimacy's archetypal mother (*yum*). Archetypal father-*cum*-archetypal mother's offspring is the (brother-sister) intimacy as the third member in the supradivine family, a self-awareness in its own right and as such having a room made of many jewels for himself. This is the intimacy's legitimate home in which it has to settle itself firmly.

Taking this instruction, forecasting the intimacy's future, to heart, the (brother-sister) intimacy, calling to mind the words of the German dramatist Friedrich Halm (Freiherr v. Münch-Bellinghausen, 1806-1871)

> Zwei Seelen und ein Gedanke,
> Zwei Herzen und ein Schlag
>
> (Two souls and one thought,
> Two hearts and one beat),

sets out on its/their journey. They mount the rays of the sun that is the rays spreading from what is their spirit/spirituality, seat themselves on a rainbow as the saddle that is the light in their spirit/spirituality, tighten a string of pearls as the girth that means their having a firm grip on the idea of the road to be taken, hold in their hands a short crystal dagger that is their discriminative-appreciative critical acumen, and ride over the sky's orb that is the lighting-up of what is the observable in the precious irrealization/nothing/nothingness (*zang-thal*) of symbolic pregnance.[259]

The fourth analogy is about the "way down" in the strict sense of the word and about the Spirit/spirituality's captivity in a world that is the epit-

[258] The distinction between the room in which the teacher/revealer 'Od-mi-'gyur-ba lives, and the room with eight doors, the eight as-if experiences, in which the sNa-tshogs-su-snang-ba lives, is the distinction between what is otherwise called the *rang-*(*gi*) *snang-*(*ba*) (the whole's "auto-lighting-up") and the *lhun-grub* ("spontaneity" – of its own accord). Over and above is a third room, referred to as *ka-dag* ("symbolic pregnance"). These distinctions do not imply separate entities, they attempt to describe an experiential multiplex.

[259] In the above presentation that follows the unknown commentator's glosses, special attention should be paid to the imagery of the string of pearls, the dagger, and the orb of the sky. On the level of representational thinking they are the itemizable things one encounters and deals with in one's everyday world, but on the level of hermeneutical thinking they are instances of symbolic expressiveness. Both levels have to be "thought" simultaneously in order not to stray into some downward or upward reductionism. The irrealization of either trend, intimated by the technical term *zang-thal* is expressly stated by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa.

ome of evil as contrasted with the goodness and beauty of the imaginal "reality." It has this to say:[260]

> Previously, in the country rNam-par-dag-pa by name, there stood a castle with eight doors. On the top of this castle there lived its lord, the *khye'u* Rig-byed by name. With him was his mother, an old woman Ling-tog-can by name. In the lower part of this country there lived a king of vicious behavior, Grags-pa-dbang-phyug by name. He had five children. While these five princes roamed around amusing themselves, an old woman Ling-tog-can had gone for a stroll into the lowest end of the lower part of a valley (in this country). The five princes put her into prison. Can you imagine that? When the [Rig-byed?] son hurried to the mother, he, too, was taken prisoner and shackled. Can you imagine that?

Even a cursory glance at this allegory reveals the presence of many by now familiar images. There is the "castle (*mkhar*) with eight doors," of which variations were a "room (*khang-pa*) with eight doors" and a "crystal room (*shel-gyi khang-pa*) with eight doors" through which the visionary experiencer could partake in Being's, the whole's, phantasmagoric "as-if" display expressive of its "spontaneity" (*lhun-grub*). Then there is the *khye'u rig-byed* "the inspiriting youngster" by which designation he referred to himself in his letter to his friends to help him.[261] Other forms of this designation are *khye'u snang-ba bsam-gyis mi-khyab-pa* "Archetypal Man whose lighting-up was inconceivably bright"[262] and *khye'u snang-ba rig-byed* "Archetypal Man who inspirits the phenomenal," as in one version of this allegory. This technical phrase is maybe the most difficult one to decode. The *khye'u*, whether as *khye'u* in Vimalamitra's writings or as *khye'u-chung* ("little *khye'u*) in Padmasambhava's works, points to the idea of the *Lichtmensch*, the epiphany of a luminous image or a higher Anthro-

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260 sDe-dge ed., 3: 204a; *Theg-pa'i mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod* (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, fol.165b); Ati, volume 1, columns 579 and 580. Since all three editions vary considerably, the following quotation is an attempt at a consolidated version:

> *sngon yul rnam-par-dag-pa zhes-bya-ba-na/ mkhar sgo-brgyad dang ldan-pa'i mkhar cig yod de/ mkhar de'i rtse-na rje khye'u rig-byed bya-ba yod/ de-la ma rgan-mo ling-tog-can bya-ba yod de/ yul de'i mda'-na sdig-spyod-pa'i rgyal-po grags-pa-dbang-phyug bya-ba yod-pas/ de-la bu rgyal-bu lnga yod-pas/ sras-po lnga sku-rtsed-la song-bas/ rgan-mo ling-tog-can mdo-na mar-la skyo sangs-la byung-ba/ sras rgyal-bu lngas btson-du bzung zer-ba de ya-cha/ de-nas bu ma'i snyegs-ma-la song-ba yang bzung-nas lcags-su bcug zer-ba de ya-cha*

261 See above p. 110.

262 See above p. 80.

pos that played a significant role in Gnostic thinking[263] whose impact on early rDzogs-chen thinking is unmistakable. The expression *rig-byed* that I have rendered by "inspiriting" needs some explanation. Actually, it is a compound made up of *rig* that, according to our Aristotelian categories, acts as both a noun and a verb, and of *byed* emphasizing its active/activating role by letting the *rig*-(*pa*) come out in full force. As noted previously, there is the distinction between *ma-rig-pa* as presenting a state or quality of "not-quite (cognitively/spiritually) excited or excitable"[264] and *rig-pa* as a supraconscious ecstatic intensity that, precisely because of its ek-stasis is more cognitive than any other cognition. So, what the latter is ecstatically cognitive of, is the *snang-ba* "the phenomenal," that which lights-up in the sense of the Greek verbal form of the *phainesthai*, rather than in the sense of some *fait accompli*. Furthermore, because of the ubiquitous visionary experiencer's presence, this *snang-ba* is inseparable from what is called its interpretation (*srid-pa*), which means that we as participants in this *snang-srid* live in a probabilistic world of our own making, and the very use of the word *rang* "own," "auto-," "self-" in its qualification as *rang-byung* "self-originated" dispenses with any creationist notions that, on closer inspection, turn out to pertain to the level of *ma-rig-pa* as do all other "ego"-centric and "ego"-logical claims.

Now, in view of the rDzogs-chen thinkers' contention that Being-*qua*-being in its closure-onto itelf as its/our anthropocosmic whole is "no-thing/nothing," a voiding (*stong*) from a dynamic perspective, "radiating," a brilliance (*gsal*) in which its (proto-)light is becoming an actual luminosity, and an "excitability/excitation" (*rig-pa*) that becomes ek-static (ecstatic), a new perspective on the *snang-ba* emerges. It may be seen and felt as *dag-pa* "pure," that is, symbolic-aesthetic, or as *ma-dag-pa* "impure," that is dull and opaque. Experienced as *dag-pa* it gives rise to the country (dimensionality) that bears the name rNam-par-dag-pa "Symbolic expressiveness" as the manifestation of the whole's "symbolic pregnance" (*ka-dag*) as intimated by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's gloss at the end of the preceding allegory.

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263 For the often confusing accounts in Gnosticism see Giovanni Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*, pp. 89f.

264 The word does not imply a negation of *rig-pa* which would be *rig-med*. The still current translation of *ma-rig-pa* (Skt. *avidyā*) by "ignorance" is, to say the least, misleading.

To make matters more complicated, from among the two commentators, Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa is the only one who defines the name of this country as meaning *rig-pa'i zhing-khams*. We have already noted the multivalence of the term *rig-pa* that, in the mythopoetic language of the allegory, is the *khye'u*, the higher Anthropos of Gnosticism. But what about *zhing-khams*, a compound in which each member has its distinct meaning and yet acts as a single reality? Specifically *zhing* is related to what is referred to as 'Og-min, the name of the highest level of our psychocosmic world that, though the first phase space in Being's closure onto itself, is "in no way inferior to Being-*qua*-being." It is imaged as having two "regions" called *padma-can* "of the nature of a lotus flower" and *bde-ba-can* "of the nature of happiness/bliss supreme," respectively. These images reflect the complementarity of the feeling tones of *ex*-tensity (*padma-can*) and *in*-tensity (*bde-ba-can*), often coupled with the overarching image of brilliance (*gsal*).[265] The second member in the compound *zhing-khams*, the *khams* relates to the more or less concrete individual's psychophysical potential that does not lose its affinity with the higher order *zhing* by virtue of its being constituted of "resonance domains" (*rigs*) that present a pentamerous coordinated hierarchy.

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[265] The image of a lotus flower is used by Padmasambhava in his *sPros-bral don-gsal*, 1: 45b, as a descriptor of the *rang-rig* that itself serves as a description of the "(darkness-)gone/(light-)spreading" (*sangs-rgyas*) experience, thingifyingly mistranslated as "Buddha." Padmasambhava's words are:

padmo 'dam-na gnas kyang skyon-gyis ma-gos ltar
phyi-nang 'khrul-par shar kyang ni
rang-rig ye-nas gol-ba med
ma-'khrul-pa-yi sangs-rgyas yin

Like a lotus flower that, though growing in a swamp, is not spoiled by any stains,
(One's) own ecstatic intensity, though it may express itself in the mistaken notions of a without and a within,
Has, since its beginningless beginning, never been such as to take such slips seriously,
It is the (darkness-)gone/(light-)spreading experience that does not stray away (from what it has been and is).

The phrase *padma-bde-gsal* has been explicated in the same work, 1: 8b, as follows:

padma-bde-gsal zer-na/ dri-ma med-pa'i snang-ba-la gnod-pa mi-skyel te/ rang-gsal 'dzin-med-du shes-par bya'o

Speaking of (Being) as padma-bde-gsal ("lotus flower-happiness-radiance") means not to harm (Being's) flawless lighting-up; in its radiating in its own light know it to have nothing to do with subjectivism.

See also above p. 115 for this phrase as a city's name.

However, the idea of the co-emergence/co-extensity of a low-level intensity (*ma-rig-pa*) with a high-level intensity (*rig-pa*), as propounded by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, and their simultaneity, as professed by both Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa and the unknown commentator, presents considerable difficulties for a Western thinker. This becomes patent in dealing with the allegory's juxtaposition of the "young" *khye'u* and the "old" woman, the son (*bu)* and the mother (*ma*), the son's inspiriting excitability (*rig-byed*) and the mother's unexcitability and unexcitation (*ma-rig-pa*). What the allegory intends is to impress on the listener a dynamic understanding of his situation that is never a once and for all accomplished fact and largely depends on the co-emergence/co-extensity/co-presence of a low-level intensity that, in mathematical diction, "causes" the whole-that-we-are to undergo symmetry-breaking processes, usually imaged and felt as a down-hill race. In less sophisticated, though not less precise, language Padmasambhava tells us:[266]

> The co-emergent low-level excitability/excitation
> Is the ground and reason for (the emergence of) the affect-polluted egological mentation.

This concise and simple statement is preceded by a rather complex description of processes that complicitly lead up to what has so summarily been stated. It has this to say:[267]

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[266] *Rin-po-che sNang-gsal spu-gri 'bar-bas 'khrul-snang rtsad-nas gcod-pa nam-mkha'i mtha' dang mnyam-pa'i rgyud,* 2: 296a:

> *lhan-cig-skyes-pa'i ma-rig de*
> *nyon-mongs-can-gyi yid-kyi gzhi*

[267] Loc. cit., fols. 295b-296a:

> *shes-pa rig-pa ma-rig gsum*
> *'khrul-pa'i rgyu yin rtsad-nas chod (1)*
>
> *yid dang rlung dang sems dang gsum*
> *'khrul-pa'i rkyen yin rtsad-nas chos (2)*
>
> *'khrul-sgo mun-pa mi-gsal gsum*
> *'khrul-pa'i dus yin rtsad-nas chod (3)*
>
> *nga-med-pa-la ngar- [296a]'dzin gsum*
> *mi-bden-pa-la bden-'dzin dang*
> *mi-rtag-pa-la rtag-'dzin gsum*
> *'khrul-pa'i ngo-bo rtsad-nas chod (4)*
>
> *sems dang yid dang bag-chags gsum*
> *'khrul-tshul yin-gyis rtsad-nas chod (5)*
>
> *rig-gzugs'od-gzugs sha-gzugs gsum*

The triad of a (basic) intelligence, an excitability, and an unexcitability
Is errancy's causal momentum, Root it out! (1)

The triad of an egological self, the currents (within the organism), and the ontic foundation
Is errancy's modifier. Root it out! (2)

The triad of errancy's doorway, darkness, and dimness
Is errancy's temporality. Root it out! (3)

The triad of holding what is not the ego to be the ego and
Holding what is not true to be true and
Holding what is impermanent to be permanent
Is errancy's "stuff." Root it out! (4)

The triad of the ontic foundation, the egological self, and the sediments (of past experiences as potentialities of future experiences)
Is errancy's modality. Root it out! (5)

The triad of the pattern excitability (assumes), the pattern the (proto)light-becoming-an-actual light, (assumes), and the pattern the "flesh" (assumes)
Is errancy's climax. Root it out! (6)

The triad of a haystack, an insect, and a mirage
Is errancy's analogy. Root it out! (7)

This is the heptad of the dull-and-opaque, the reverse (of the symbolic-aesthetic)
Root out this errancy heptad!

With the exception of the sixth topic and the thorny phrase "a (basic) intelligence," this list of the features of the co-emergent/co-extensive/co-present low-level excitability/excitation (*lhan-cig-skyes-pa'i ma-rig-pa*) is self-explicatory. However, a few words may elucidate the rDzogs-chen conception of *shes-pa* (here rendered as "basic intelligence'). In the rDzogs-chen thinkers' holistic world-view wholeness or Being-*qua*-being in its first symmetry transformation into the being-that-we-are (Being's closure onto itself as one's own most unique ability-to-be, in phenomenological diction) is "intelligent" in the sense of being cognitive (mental/

'khrul-'bras yin gyis rtsad-nas chod (6)

sbur-pa srin-bu smig-rgyu gsum
'khrul-pa'i dpe yin rtsad-nas chod (7)

log-pa'i ma-dag bdun-po yin
'khrul-pa bdun-po rtsad-nas chod

mentalistic), mostly reductionistic, as well as spiritual, creative (not to be confused with manufacturing). An almost inevitable consequence of this vision is that excitability/excitation (*rig-pa*) as well as unexcitability/unexcitedness (*ma-rig-pa*) are themselves emergent features.

To the extent that the ubiquitous visionary experiencer is "excitable" and "inspiriting" (*rig*, *rig-byed*), his inspiriting excitability expresses itself in the pattern that he presents in his being human, which allows for degrees of intensity. Similarly, his also being "luminous" (*'od*) expresses itself in the pattern that is seen and felt as one's so-called aura, a force field that also allows for degrees of intensity and is "felt" by others as a person's warmth or frigidness. Lastly, as "flesh" (*sha*) he is, so to say, the ultimate in concretization that, in this case, allows for degrees in bulkiness.

To return to the events in this fourth allegory. The transition from the lofty realm rNam-par-dag-pa, "Symbolic expressiveness," with its lord (*rje*), the *khye'u*, into its lower and darker regions due to the co-presence of the low-level excitability/excitation takes place almost imperceptibly. Here, their "king" (*rgyal-po*), a thoroughly vicious character, reigns. His very name Grags-pa-dbang-phyug "Fame-(coupled with) power and wealth" intimates his being the source and root of all that is polluting and poisoning the atmosphere by way of what is the instinctive-affective-emotional, summed up in the belief in an ego/self. His five sons, the traditionally known five "pollutants" of desire-attachment, irritation-aversion, delusion-infatuation, arrogance-conceit, and jealousy-envy, following in their father's footsteps, have their field-day with the sensuous-sensual and promiscuity is their norm. Even the old woman Ling-tog-can who, going for a stroll, ventures into their fields does not make a difference to them. Eventually even her son, the *khye'u rig-byed* is made their prisoner.[268] Certainly, things could not get worse. In other words, it's about time to get "up again."

This "getting up again" is the topic of the remaining four allegories (according to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's counting) of which two have been taken from Vimalamitra's *Rig-pa rang-shar*. Of these, the first, that is, the fifth allegory in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's list of eight, he has titled "counteracting/reversing the trend to go astray." Basically it is an overview

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[268] The final sentence in this allegory is near-unintelligible. The noun *snyegs-ma* is not listed in any available dictionaries.

of the “getting up again” process that comprises four phases. Each specific phase’s feature is mentioned and asked about its meaning by a *mkha'-'gro-ma*, an elemental force, whose name and very request, not included in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's presentation, is helpful in assisting us in understanding this process.[269]

The first phase’s topic is the question by which means in general the human beings’ dichotomic postulational-representational thinking as the cause of their going astray can be eliminated. This question is asked by the *mkha'-'gro-ma* “She who glows from within in the light of originary awareness mode(s)” by name.[270]

The second phase’s topic is the question about the specific means of eliminating the cause. It is asked by the *mkha'-'gro-ma* “She who is of the resounding sound of the adamantine phoneme *hūṁ*.”[271]

The third phase’s topic is the question about the elimination in its actual progress. It is asked by an intrapsychic force that bears the significant name “She who is an army queen, mopping up (what has been left over).”[272]

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269 The Tibetan term *mkha'-'gro-ma* has suffered from the cultists' involuntary or even intended mistranslations as is evidenced by such expressions as “sky-walker” and “sky-dancer.” The latter so-called translation reveals the added confusion of '*gro* (“to go,” “to walk”) with *bro*, a name of a kind of dance in East Tibet. Furthermore, in the Tibetan compound the word *mkha'* does not mean “sky” (as ordinarily understood), but “space,” “spaciousness” in the sense of *spatium* as a dimensionality, not as an emplacement, pertaining to originary awareness mode(s) that are not concerned with the thingifications of everyday thinking in terms of subject and object. Actually, the Tibetan term *mkha'-'gro-ma* is the hermeneutical interpretation of the Indic word *ḍākinī*, the feminine form of the masculine noun *ḍāka*, corresponding to the Sanskrit word *jñāna*, meaning “intuitive knowledge.” Although the masculine *mkha'-'gro* and the feminine *mkha'-'gro-ma* exemplify the principle of complementarity, the emphasis placed on its feminine component is to show its importance in appreciating, rather than analyzing, what is experienced. Complementarity as understood in the context of interpersonal relationships by the process-oriented rDzogs-chen thinkers has nothing to do with the activity-passivity cliché propounded and perpetuated by some Western sociologists and psychologists.

270 Tib. *mkha'-'gro-ma ser-mo ye-shes-kyi mdangs dang ldan-ma.* Her yellow color (*ser-mo*) intimates that as an elemental force in its luminous character she is experienced as having a distinct color tone.

271 Tib. *rdo-rje hūṁ sgra-can*. This phoneme sums up the traditional five originary awareness modes.

272 Tib. '*joms-byed dmag-gi rgyal-mo*. There are four “army queens” and four high-ranking military officers (*dmag-dpon chen-mo*) who, too, are females. The intrapsychic reality has not only a feminine character, but is also hierarchically organized. Relevant texts are the

The forth phase's topic is the question about how it feels when everything limiting has dissolved. It is asked in unison by the *rdo-rje mkha'-'gro-ma*s.

In the following translation of this allegory I have indicated its fourfold character by spacing the topics for clarity's sake:[273]

> Previously, in the country Rin-po-che spungs-pa by name, an old woman had a precious jewel. When five thieves, (each of them being an) individual character, took it away, the old woman was overcome with grief. Just think of it!
>
> Whilst tracking down the thieves, the old woman came into a country that was of the nature of thorns. (There), having indicted the five thieves, the old woman fainted. Just think of it!
>
> Thereafter, the old woman who had fainted when she indicted the five thieves in the country that was of the nature of thorns, vanished. Just think of it!
>
> Thereafter, to continue, the old woman's son Me-lha dkar-po by name said: "So be it." When he asked: "Has my jewel been lost?" the five (thieves) answered: "The jewel has not been lost, but you will have to kill your mother, the old woman. Unless you kill your mother, you will not get your jewel." When he had killed his mother, he ate the flesh, drank the blood, sucked the bones, and insubstantialized her, whereupon the thieves returned the jewel (to him). Just think of it!

As has been so often the case in the various allegories, the names of the locale and the actors in it tell us a lot. So also in this somewhat gruesome

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dPal Khrag-'thung gal-po, 23: 1-219a, and the *Ma-mo 'dus-pa rtsa-ba'i rgyud*, 15: 63a-78a. Both works are said to have been composed by Padmasambhava. None of them has as yet been studied.

273 *Theg-pa'i mchog rin-po-che'i mdzod* (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, fol. 166a), Ati, volume 1, column 581; sDe-dge ed., 3: 204ab:

> *sngon yul rin-po-che spungs-[204b]pa zhes-bya-ba-na/ rgan-mo gcig-la nor-bu rin-po-che gcig yod-pa/ rkun-mo mi-lngas khyer-nas/ rgan-mo dug-bsngal-gyis zin zer-ba de ya-cha*
>
> *rgan-mo de'i rjes-bcad-pas/ yul tsher-ma-can-du song-nas/ rkun-mo mi-lnga bkug-pas/ rgan-mo brgyal zer-ba de ya-cha*
>
> *de-nas rkun-mo yul tsher-ma-can-nas rjes-chod-pas/ rgan-mo brgyal-ba sangs zer-ba de ya-cha*
>
> *de-nas yang rgan-mo de'i bu me-lha dkar-po zhes-bya-ba des 'di-skad ces zer-ro// nga'i nor-bu ma-brlag-gam byas-pas/ mi lnga-po na-re/ nor-bu ma-brlag-gis/ khyod rang-gis a-ma rgan-mo sod cig/ ma rgan-mo ma-bsad-par nor-bu mi-ster-ro zer-bas/ khos kho-rang-gi ma bsad-nas sha zos khrag 'thung rus-pa mur/ dngos-po-med-par byas-pas/ nor-bu rkun-mos byin zer-ba de ya-cha*

allegory the locale’s name Rin-po-che spungs-pa, “Heap of precious stones,” points to a higher-order reality within the visionary experiencer’s organism.[274] Both Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa and the unknown commentator specify this higher-order reality as the *tsitta* that itself is located in the visionary experiencer’s heart.[275] The old woman (*rgan-mo*), whose name is not mentioned explicitly since the narrator obvioulу presumed his audience’s familiarity with her name Ling-tog-can, is specified by both authors as the ubiquitous experiencer’s low-level excitation/excitability (*ma-rig-pa*), and the jewel is said to be his originary awareness modes as functions of his supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa'i ye-shes*). The five thieves[276] are the five poisons, the instinctive-affective forces such as desire-attachment, irritation-aversion and so on, each of them having a distinctly individual character. When the thieves carry the old woman’s precious jewel away, she is naturally grief-stricken. How deep her grief is, is expressed in the unknown commentator’s explication of the narrator’s exclamation of amazement: “just think of it,” to the effect that the old woman is stuck in the swamp that is samsara. Restating, in contemporary diction, what has been presented in the form of a leading question, we can say that this first phase’s topic aims at drawing our attention to the situation in which we find ourselves, robbed of what is most valuable, and at advising us to “start thinking.”

This leads us to the second phase’s topic that tells us to track down the whereabouts of the thieves and, in so doing, consciously as we might say, realize that we find ourselves in a rather “thorny” and tricky predicament.

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[274] This distinction between a higher-order and a lower-order reality is linguistically expressed by the designating the higher-order reality as Rin-po-che-spungs-pa (in Sanskrit *Ratnakūṭa*, also a name of a section in the Buddhist Canon) and the lower-order reality as Rin-po-che'i phung-po (in Sanskrit **Ratnaskandha*). See above p. 117.

[275] The word *tsitta* is the Tibetan transliteration of the Sanskrit word *citta*, regularly translated as *sems* “mentation” in the sense of constituting the background of representational thinking in general. On the role of the heart in Western thinking see Stephan Strasser, *Phenomenology of Feeling – An Essay on the Phenomenon of the Heart*, and Milad Doueihi, *A Perverse History of the Human Heart*.

[276] The Tibetan term *rkun-mo* is a feminine noun. Its use shows that these intrapsychic forces, pertaining to a deeper level of the psyche, are feminine in nature as compared to the higher level of the so-called rationality deemed to be masculine in nature. To a certain extent this image corresponds to the late Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung’s idea of an *anima*. A good summary of it is given by Daryl Sharp, *C.G.Jung Lexicon – A Primer of Terms & Concepts*, s.v.

After all, we have entered a territory of which we knew little and now have to face up to what it holds for us. As Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa elaborates, this is done by the visionary experiencer exercizing his critical acumen (*shes-rab*) that differentiates between what is his *rig-pa* ("optimal excitability") and what is its co-emergent and co-existent low-level excitability (*ma-rig-pa*) with its five poisons, the instinctive-affective, as the source of his going astray into mistaken identifications. In this dawning realization that he is "running around in circles," his once so dominant low-level excitability with its five poisonous pollutants gets subdued, though still persisting latently. The mythopoetic language of the allegory impressively speaks of the old woman's mere fainting.

The third phase's topic is the climaxing of what is still a more or less this-worldly situation. That which had been a dawning realization of an optimal excitability and a waning of a low-level excitability, has now become a full realization and elimination. From Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's continuation of the preceding phase's topic we learn that, once the visionary experiencer has come face to face with what is his supraconscious ecstatic intensity and recognized it as what it is by having eradicated the root of his errancy, his low-level excitability vanishes by itself.

The forth phase's topic leads us into the other-worldly dimension of the visionary experiencer. However, speaking of an other-worldly dimension does not mean that there is a gap between it and the this-wordly dimension. Rather, it means that the visionary experiencer's perspective has become broader. The allegory's mythopoetic language expresses this by speaking of the figure of "the old woman's son Me-lha dkar-po by name." This name, literally translated, means a "white fire-god." As a god (*lha*) he is as much this-worldly — this world of ours being full of animate beings, in the narrower sense of the word, humans, and gods — as he is other-worldy, that is, imaginal. As fire (*me*) he reflects the fire associated with what in ordinary parlance is said to be a person's critical, discriminative-appreciative acumen (*shes-rab*). His color "white" (*dkar-po*) emphasizes his brightness that stands in sharp contrast with the "blackness" and darkness of the instinctive-affective. But what about his being "that old woman's son" (*rgan-mo de'i bu*)? Let us remind ourselves of the fact that the old woman, though always spoken of as being the individual's low-level excitability/excitation (*ma-rig-pa*), still has some excitability (*rig-pa*) about her, which allows us to speak of this low-level excitability as a smouldering fire that in

the mother-son relationship bursts into a blazing fire. Consequently, as both Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa and the unknown commentator explicate, this Me-lha dkar-po is the visionary experiencer's own self-reflexive, ecstatically (ek-statically) intense awareness. Assured by the old woman's thievish underlings that his jewel has not been lost with her immersion in samsara, but that he has to kill his mother before he will get back his jewel, he realizes that it is only by looking into himself that he will again be himself as the jewel that he had been before it was stolen, and that in this self-reflexive, ecstatically (ek-statically) intense awareness its co-existent unexcitability/unexcitation has simply vanished. And so, as the allegory elaborates, he kills his mother, eats her flesh, drinks her blood, sucks her bone marrow, and insubstantializes all that pertains to the lower-order reality. It is the last event in this gruesome account that reveals the intended psychological meaning. As Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa elaborates, "eating her flesh" means the auto-dissolution of the fragmentizing representational thinking and with this auto-dissolution its inherent irritation-aversion regaining its basically symbolic expressiveness without the visionary experiencer's futile attempts to remove its negative implications. Similarly, "drinking her blood" means the desire-attachment-possessiveness' regaining its symbolic expressiveness, and "sucking her bone marrow" means the visionary experiencer's basically as yet undifferentiated cognitiveness regaining its symbolic expressiveness. In a certain sense, this three-phase passage reflects a move from the external via the internal into the arcane. Taken as a whole, this movement is a process of insubstantialization and irrealization of whatever is of a lower-order reality, not its outright rejection. Without the presence of the lower-order reality even the higher-order reality would become meaningless. Neither is an absolute as postulated by representational thinking and the thought systems (philosophies) based on it. As Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa states at the end of his explication of this allegory, when with this inward-looking that is more than just introspection, the *rang-rig*, this non-referential awareness that must be experienced in its ownness, takes over, the five poisons that manifest themselves as external objects, together with their progenitrix, the co-extensive, *com*-present low-level excitability (*lhan-skyes ma-rig-pa*), regain their translucent symbolic expressiveness (*dag*). In other words, their thingishness to which we have been so long habituated, dissolves by itself. And this is what, according to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, the above allegory intends to con-

vey: the jewel that is the self-originated originary awareness mode(s) is obtained by the jewel itself.

Between this allegory, the fifth in the set of eight, or the first in the "up again" move, depending on the manner one prefers to count, and the sixth in the set of eight, the *Rig-pa rang-shar* inserts another allegory that is told in response to the question about a foolproof means by the crowd of *mkha'-'gro-ma*s whose color is said to be red.[277] The allegory runs as follows:[278]

> Previously, in the huge capital of the country Magadha[279] by name, the king mDzes-ldan snying-po by name, had a beautiful shrine room. The populace staged a revolution and set fire to the shrine room from the ten directions of the compass. The shrine room was not consumed by it. Just think of it!

The unknown commentator explains the "previously" as a reference to the pile of sediments of past experiences as potentialities for future experiences, by which in ordinary parlance a person's body in its psychophysical organization was understood, and the "king" as this pile's (optimal) excitability (*rig-pa*). His name mDzes-ldan snying-po, the "Beauty-endowed core intensity (of wholeness)" is a variant of the names of the universal rulers of the cosmos that under each subsequent ruler became smaller and smaller so that from its original tetrad only one segment remained: the world of ours, called the cosmos or the universe. The second component in the king's name, "core intensity" (*snying-po*) points beyond itself to that reality of which it is its core intensity. The "shrine room" is interpreted as five (proto-)lights (*'od*) and as such point beyond themselves to the light of

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[277] Red is the color of passion and fervor that are needed in performing a task; yellow (see allegory number four) is the color of wealth and resourcefulness; white (see allegory number three) is the color of cleanliness and immaculateness. The color blue signifying infinity and depth is not directly mentioned, but is intimated by the phoneme *hūṁ* (see allegory number five).

[278] Loc. cit., 3: 205b; Ati, volume 1, column 581:

> *sngon yul ma-ga-dha'i grong-khyer chen-po zhes-bya-ba-na/ rgyal-po mdzes-ldan snying-po zhes-bya-ba-la/ lha-khang yid-du 'ong-ba zhig yod-pa-las 'bangs-rnams-kyis kheng-log byas te/ lha-khang-la me phyogs-bcu-nas btang-bas lha-khang ma-tshig zer-ba de ya-cha*

[279] It is interesting to note that the Tibetan translators of Indic texts in their endeavor to Tibetanize non-Tibetan words failed to "translate" both Magadha and Kosala (see above p. 77), but had apparently no difficulty in translating *Vaiśālī* as *yangs-pa-can*. All three localities played a significant role in the life of the historical Buddha.

which they are its diffractions that in their concrescence and concretization become the residence, the "shrine room" (*lha-khang*), of him who is the supernal light in the guise of the "king." The sublimity of the king is contrasted with the vulgarity of the "populace" that is interpreted as the pollutants (*nyong-mongs*) whose domain is the egological and egocentric mentation's limited vision, otherwise spoken of as the individual's low-level excitability/excitation (*ma-rig-pa*). Somehow they feel left out of the picture and, as the allegory tells its listeners, stage a revolution and attempt to burn down the king's shrine room. As the unknown commentator explains, this attempt reflects their coarsest nature and, as we might add, is bound to fail because of the impetuous revolutionaries' limited vision. The allegory itself laconically sums up their failure by stating that the king's shrine room was not at all consumed by their incendiary actions.

After this insert the *Rig-pa rang-shar* continues with what in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's discussion has become the second allegory in the fourfold "up again" movement or the sixth allegory in his eightfold "down and up again" presentation. This allegory is of two parts. The first part is told in response to the question about the means of becoming *erlichtet* (alight) in an ultimate sense by a *mkha'-'gro-ma* whose color, too, is said to be red and who bears the frightening name of "she who sucks the last drop of blood."[280] The second part is told in response to the request concerning the means by the (*mkha'-'gro-ma*) whose color, too, is said to be red and who bears the reassuring name of "invigoration corporeity."[281] In the following quotation I have indicated the allegory's two-part topic by inserting a space between the first part and the second:[282]

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[280] Tib. *khrag-'jib-ma*. Blood is the symbolic expression for the individual's instinctivity (*Triebhaftigkeit*) that, as the preceding allegory has shown, is antagonistic to his spirit/spirituality.

[281] Tib. *dbang-gi sku*. While the color red intimates her passionate character, her name intimates her corporeally (*sku*) experienced presence as being invigorating through and through (*dbang*). Though usually rendered as empowerment within a ritualistic context, experientially speaking, *dbang* describes the feeling of being vitalized and strengthened.

[282] Loc.cit., 3: 205b; Ati, volume 1, columns 585-586.

> *yul 'dus-pa rnam-par-bkod-pa zhes bya-ba-na/ rgya-nag-gi rgyal-po li-gar-ta zhes-bya-bas/ gab-tshe chen-po gcig bting-nas/ gshin-rtis byas-pas/ gto-chog-tu btsun-mo nyi-shu-rtsa-gcig mdzes-pa'i chas-su bcug-nas/ lam-po-che'i bzhi-mdor bskyal-bas shi-kha bcad-pa zer-ba de ya-cha*
>
> *de-nas rgya-nag-po'i rgyal-po li-gar-ta' phrul-gyi rgyal-po des btsun-mo nyi-shu-rtsa-gcig-la mdzes-pa'i chas-kyis brgyan/ mgyog-pa'i rta bskon/ gsal-ba'i mig phye/*

> In the country 'Dus-pa rnam-par-bkod-pa ("Assemblage Orderliness") by name, the black realm's[283] king Li-gar-ta by name had made a big astrological calculation and determined what kind of funeral arrangements should be made. Into the ceremony of averting evil he brought twenty-one ladies of rank (*btsun-mo*) of exquisite beauty. Then, he carried (the prospective corpse) to the crossing of two roads on the highway, (and thus) had done with (the moment of) dying. Just think of it!
>
> Thereafter, the phantom king Li-gar-ta, the black realm's king, flamboyant with (his bevy of) twenty-one ladies of rank of exquisite beauty, mounted his swift-running horse, opened wide his radiating eyes, carried (in his one hand) a weapon to strike (an adversary), and held (in his other hand) a blade to finish (him) off, clothed himself in a (multihued) garment, went in search of the country that (really) is, went in search of a home to stay, and, having found the way to it, sped away, (and thus) had done with (the moment of) dying. Just think of it!

Both Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa and the unknown commentator, despite their different readings of their source, agree that the first component in the country's name refers to any individual's instinctivity in all its crudeness that yet, without their saying so, exhibits a certain orderliness in its concretization into his body-mind complexity. As such it is, mythopoetically speaking, a "disciple" under the guidance of a competent "teacher," the king. This guidance in its concrete (unexamined) sociocultural context involved, as it still does in modern so-called enlightened circles, astrological calculations whose aim was to make the questioner aware of his existential reality by examining his present limiting (Being's closing-in onto itself) situatedness. Three interrelated themes comprise this examination and realization. They are technically referred to as *rgyud*, *lung*, and *man-ngag*. Of these, *rgyud* means "continuous connectedness (with the whole)," *lung* means the "promise (that the whole makes and will keep)," and *man-*

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brdeg-pa'i mtshon bskur/ gcod-pa'i so btags/ gyon-pa'i gos bskon/ 'dug-pa'i yul btsal/ gnas-pa'i khyim btsal/ 'gro-ba'i lam btsal-nas btang-bas shi-kha chod zer-ba de ya-cha

Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's version, loc.cit., fol. 166b, is a reproduction of this allegory in the Thimphu edition, notorious for its abundance in misspellings. There, instead of 'dus-pa "assemblage," we read 'dul-ba "discipline," which is also the name of the first section of the Tibetan Tripitaka, the bKa'-'gyur (Kanjur).

[283] Tib. *rgya-nag*. Usually this name refers to China, the vast country (*rgya*) where its people dress in black (*nag*). The name of this country's king, Li-gar-ta, seems to be an allusion to *li-yul*, the Tibetan name for Khotan on the Southern Silk Road. For this reason I have avoided to translate *rgya-nag* by China. Moreover, the Silk Road oasis states were pretty independent.

ngag means "crossing the (last) barrier" (that stands in the way of our becoming whole again). The "calculation that concerns the funeral arrangements" is explained as the means how to become released and, as we might say, stand free from the ever threatening clutches of samsara. It is here that utmost caution has to be exercized. This cautionary ritualistic procedure is called "the ceremony of averting evil," its aim being specifically to be alert and to take care that things do not go wrong. As an aid "twenty-one ladies of rank" (*btsun-mo*) are brought in. Each of them, in her own way, illustrates the individual's "coming face to face" (*ngo-sprod*) with his real being and recognizing it as what it is.[284] In a certain sense, this coming face to face with what one really is and in this encounter recognizing one's Self, is a dying to one's habitual way of life and now, as the allegory states, is one's finding oneself at the "crossing of two roads", the one leading "down" into the murkiness of worldly existence, the other leading "up" into the light or, in the wake of our ingrained thingifying, reductionist mode of thinking, the cyberlight. The "crossing of two roads" is an instant on life's "highway," so aptly referred to as the *bar-do* meaning an "interval," an "interim phase," an "intermezzo." In his dying to his habitual world, the individual, life's disciple, the visionary experiencer (whichever designation one prefers) "has done with the moment of dying.[285]

In the second part of this allegory, the black realm's king Li-gar-ta has become a "phantom," a felt and seen magic presence, and, in the words of the unknown commentator, the headmaster of life's disciple instructing him in what is the highest level of the learning process that leads to his, as we would say, self-transcendence. His "twenty-one ladies of rank" are, according to the unknown commentator, expressions of his own luminosity;

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[284] The word *btsun-mo* denotes a young strong-willed woman who, in the sociocultural context used in the singular, is more of the nature of a king's *maîtresse*. See also above p. 30 n. 63. When used in the plural, the word denotes the many facets of coming face to with with one's real being. See above pp. 100-103.

[285] In this connection it may not be out of place to quote Karl Jaspers' (1883-1969) words, as quoted in *A Dictionary of Philosophical Quotations* (eds. A.J. Ayer and Jane O'Grady), p. 214:

> Standing on the borderline of world and Existens*, possible Existenz views all existence as more than existence [.]*

and Henri Scott Holland's (1847-1910) sermon preached on Whitsunday, 1910, as quoted in *The Little Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, p.93:

> Death is nothing at all; it does not count. I have only slipped away into the next room.

in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's interpretation, they are the visionary experiencer's direct vision of the supraconscious ecstatic intensity's intrinsic *Lichthaftigkeit* (luminosity) that leads him to mount his "swift-running horse," his critical discriminative-appreciative acumen that once again, is met with, in both authors' explication, as the "blade" he holds in one of his two hands and is used by him to "finish off" the adversary whom he has espied. As such it is related to the *man-ngag* level, the highest level within his tripartite organization. This "finishing off" is facilitated by and happens in the wake of his "opening wide his radiating eyes" by which the "four lamps" are intimated in their capacity of illuminating whatever comes into their reach and range. As a matter of fact, "seeing" ("seeing aletheically" in Heidegger's words) is a very active process. As such we meet it again as the "weapon to strike" he holds in the other of his two hands, which means that, before an adversary can be finished off, he has to be struck down and incapacitated from raising his ugly head again, as we might say. This "weapon," therefore, is related to the *rgyud* and *lung* levels that precede the *man-ngag* level. The "garment" in which he clothes himself, is, according to the unknown commentator, his, that is, the whole's, (proto-)light (*'od*); according to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, it is the "four lighting-up" experiences.[286] It would exceed the scope of this scrutiny to go into the details of these lighting-up experiences. Suffice it to say that they present a cyclical process that starts with the emergence of the whole's creative and perceptive dynamic that is "seen" and "felt" as operating *ex*-tensively (*chos-nyid mngon-sum*), increases in its "felt" intensity (*nyams gong-'phel*), reaches its peak in its "noetic" intensity (*rig-pa tshad-phebs*), and subsides in its source, the creative and perceptive dynamic (*chos-nyid zad-sa*).

However, this recurrent lighting-up has something disquieting about it and so prompts the visionary experiencer to search for that country (*yul*) which, from the deepest level of experience, is so transparent and of such symbolic pregnance (*ka-dag*) that, strictly speaking, nothing can be said *of* and/or *about* it, whilst yet it is felt as a presence. It is in this presence that the visionary experience looks for a home (*khyim*) in which he can stay.

[286] Tib. *snang-ba bzhi.* An excellent philological-historical account of these experiences is presented by Jean-Luc Achard, *L'Essence perlée du Secret*, pp. 121-127. Additional information may be found in the *Chos thams-cad-kyi don bstan-pa* (Taipei ed., vol. 55, pp. 274-301), pp. 292 column 6 to 296 column 1.

This home is the effulgence in five hues of the primal light (*Urlicht*) since it emerged that, paradoxically speaking, dates back to a time before time. Prosaically stated this means that we as luminous beings live in a luminous environment of our illuminating nature. The road to our home is the *bar-do*, in other words, the whole as a movement of its own accord. As such it is also a link between what, from the perspective of our Being/being, we call "beginning" and "end," respectively. Yet, even this deepest level of experience points to some reality beyond what can be expressed in words. This beyond, a beyond the imaginal dimension of ours, Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa has attempted to express in these words:[287]

> Having found (and travelled) the road that is the *bar-do* or the dissolution into the This, one has come to the end (of one's journey) in the beginning (of one's journey) that is Being-*qua*-being. One has reached (one's) adamantine level (where) there is neither birth nor death.

The allegory ends at its second part with the same words it used at the end of its first part: "done with (the moment of) dying." This is due to the fact that, though two different levels are involved, the language we use, is unable to cope with these subtle nuances.

The seventh allegory in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's list of eight, comprising both the going "down" and the going "up again," and the third in the going "up again" section, he has titled the "binding injunction to cross the mountain pass by way of a visionary experience" and has this to say:[288]

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[287] Loc. cit., fol. 167a:

> *bar-do'am 'di-nyid-la grol-ba'i lam btsal-bas/ thog-ma'i gzhi-la mthar-phyin te/ skye-shi med-pa rdo-rje'i sa thob-pa'o*

[288] Tib. *lta-bas la-bzla-ba'i gdams-nag*. It is taken from the *Seng-ge rtsal-rdzogs chen-po'i rgyud* in the sDe-dge edition of the *rNying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*, 4: 167b. This version differs considerably from the one presented by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, loc.cit., fols. 167a-168a, that tallies with the one in Ati, volume 2, columns 345-347, as quoted here:

khams-gsum sems-can thams-cad-rnams
shin-tu mtshon-cha rnon-po-yis
thams-cad bsgral-na dgnos-grub 'byung

thugs-rjes thams-cad sgrol-ba'i phyir
rang-gi rdo-rje-slob-dpon nyid
bsgral-nas rgya-mtshor bsgyur byas-na
snang-srid chos-rnams shes-par 'gyur

rang-rig ye-shes yod-pa'i phyir
rtag-tu 'grogs-pa'i mched-lcam gnyis
gcong-rong dang-du bsgyur byas-na

ye-shes sku dang mi-'bral 'gyur

lu-gu-rgyud-du yod-pa'i phyir
*lus srog bskyed-pa'i pha-ma gnyis [*346*]*
thad-la bton-na rang-lus 'phel

ye-shes yul dang 'phrad-pa'i phyir
mchod-rten lha-khang la-sogs-rnams
phyags te rgya-mtshor pho byas-na
yang-dag don-gyi snying-po mthong

sgron-ma mkha'-la gsal-ba'i phyir
dkon-mchog gsum-po rgyab-phyogs-na
zhing-khams thams-cad mthong-bar 'gyur

sku-gsum snang-ba yod-pa'i phyir
sangs-rgyas bsgral te dur bcug-na
rang-gi snang-ba rtogs-par 'gyur

'byung-ba rang-la log-pa'i phyir
chos-rnams mer bsregs chur-pho-na
rang-gi rig-pa rtogs-par 'gyur

shes-rab don-la spyod-pa'i phyir
sems-can thams-cad dus-gcig-tu
bsgral-na snang-ba thams-cad stong-par 'gyur

thugs-rje'i don-nyid ma-'gags phyir
rang-srog rang-gis bcad-byas-na
rang-rig yul dang 'phrad-par 'gyur

sgron-ma 'od-lngas brgyan-pa'i phyir
*skye-dgu thams-cad dbang- [*347*] bsdus-na*
rang-nyid stobs dang ldan-par 'gyur

ye-shes chags-pa med-pa'i phyir
lha-tshogs btson-du bzung-byas-na
dgnos-grub thams-cad nye-bar 'gyur

rig-pa kun-tu-yangs-pa'i phyir
snying-po'i rgyun-thag bcad-byas-na
bskyed-rim thams-cad gsal-bar 'gyur

rig-pa rtsol-bsgrub bral-ba'i phyir
tshogs-la bsag-tu med-pas-na
sbyin-pa thams-cad rdzogs-par 'gyur

rang-rig btang-bzhag bral-ba'i phyir
thabs dang shes-rab ya-phral-na
rang-don thams-cad rnyed-par 'gyur

rig-pa gcer-bur yod-pa'i phyir
rgyu-'bras mgo-mjug ldog-pas-na
skye-ba med-pa thob-par 'gyur

rgyu-yis bskyed-du med-pa'i phyir

1) When all the sentient beings in the three levels of their enworldedness, in their totality, have been set free [from their shackles] with a very sharp weapon, (spiritual) achievements come about.

2) When, in order that [the Self's] suprasensual concern may set each and everyone free, the adamantine headmaster (who is) one's self/Self, after having set free (each and everyone), is turned into an ocean, the phenomena of the interpreted world (*snang-srid*) are known [as what they are].

3) When, in order that this self-cognition (*rang-rig*) may exist as (its/our) originary awareness modes (*ye-shes*), both brother and sister, their constant companions, are recognized as being a precipice, the originary awareness modes [as the founded] and the fore-structures (of one's concrete being) (*sku*) [as the founding] become inseparable.

4) When, in order that [the above] may exist as a coherent set of impulses, both father and mother as the originators of (one's) body and life-force are directly placed before (us), oneself (as a) body (*rang-lus)* flourishes.

5) When, in order that the originary awareness modes may encounter (themselves as their) dimensionality, [one's bodily existence as] a site of worship (*mchod-rten*) as well as a shrine room (*lha-khang*) and so on is swept away and transformed into an ocean, the core intensity of one's more-than-real existential reality is seen.

6) When, in order that the lamps may radiate in (their) sky/space/*spatium* (dimensionality), the three jewels are pushed into the background, all the (spiritual) realms and (psychophysical) levels are seen.

7) When, in order that the three fore-structures may exist as (the anthropocosmic whole's) lighting-up, the (darkness)gone/(light) having-spread (experience) has been set free and entombed in it, they are understood as (their/one's) own lighting-up.

8) When, in order that the elemental forces may revert back into (what they have been in) themselves, all phenomena have been consumed by fire and transformed into water, they are understood as (their/one's) own supraconscious ecstatic intensity.

9) When, in order that the critical discriminative-appreciative acumen (*shes-rab*) may deal with (what is one's) existential reality (*don*), each and every sentient being has been set free at one and the

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kun-gzhi rtsad-nas bcad-pa-na
mngon-sangs-rgyas-par 'gyur-ba yin

chos-sku gdod-nas dag-pa'i phyir
gsad-gcad las-rnams byas-pas-na
dge-ba thams-cad 'phel-bar 'gyur

rig-pa srog dang bral-ba'i phyir
rang-snang ye-shes rtogs-lugs de-bzhin-no

same time, each and every (phenomenal) lighting-up turns into (its) no-thing/ nothingness/openness.

10) When, in order that (one's) very existential reality, (one's) supra-sensual concern (*thugs-rje*), may never cease (to be operative), (one's/its lower-order) own life-force is cut off by itself, (one's) self-cognition (*rang-rig*) encounters its [very] dimensionality.

11) When, in order that the lamps may be enhanced in beauty by five (proto-)lights, each and everyone of the sentient beings in their nine-level organization has been gathered in (their lighting), one's (their) ownness becomes endowed with (their) strength.

12) When, in order that the originary awareness modes have nothing to do with attachment, the crowd of gods has been imprisoned, each and every (spiritual) achievement is close by.

13) When, in order that the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*) may stay utterly vast, the flow and stranglehold of opinions are broken, each and every phase in the developing stage (starts) radiating.

14) When, in order that the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*) (may stand) aloof of making efforts and achieving (something), (one realizes that) there is no point in accumulating merits, each and every gift becomes complete (as such).

15) When, in order that (one's) self-cognition (*rang-rig*) (may stand) aloof of dismissing (something) and positing (something in its stead), one does away with expertise and critical acumen, each and everyone's ownmost existential reality is won.

16) When, in order that the supraconscious ecstatic intensity may exist as (its) nakedness, the sequence of cause and effect, beginning and end, has been repulsed, no-birth is obtained.

17) When, in order that there be nothing (that might be said) to be initiated by a causal momentum, the all-ground (of any assumptions) has been eradicated, the (darkness-)gone/(light-)having-spread (experience) becomes a super-direct experience.

18) When, in order that the fore-structure of (one's) meaningfulness (*chos-sku*) may remain of (the nature of) symbolic expressiveness since its beginning, one commits such (crimes) as killing and exterminating, one's wholesome capacities and capabilities increase.

19) In order that the supraconscious ecstatic intensity (may remain standing) aloof of the (lower order) life-force, the understanding of its originary awareness modes (as its) lighting-up by (and as itself) is its just-so-ness.

Apart from occasional, nonetheless pertinent glosses by an unknown author, it is Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa who has provided us with a detailed exegesis that is pre-eminently onto-psychological, by which term I understand his concern with the ubiquitous visionary experiencer's existential re-

ality (*don*) or, as we might say for want of a better term, his authentic Self that is not identical with the ego/self (*yid*) or its mental/mentalistic premise (*sems*). Like his rDzogs-chen predecessors, he is concerned with the whole's supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*) that, if I may say so, spills over into the whole's closing-in onto itself as the visionary experiencer's *rang-rig* (Skt. *svasaṁvitti)* that has roused quite some controversies in India,[289] as has our "self-knowledge" or "self-cognition" (as which the Indian and Tibetan terms have been mechanically rendered) in its Western context. In passing it may be noted that the three terms *sems*, *yid*, and *rig-pa* as descriptors of the triune mind (in Western diction) are already found with Padmasambhava and explicated by him as follows:[290]

> To his entourage's question of whether *sems*, *rig-pa*, and *yid* are of one and the same "stuff" or are each different, the teacher/revealer responded by saying: "This depends on whether your question relates to Being-*qua*-being (*gzhi*) or to its inner dynamic (*rtsal*). With respect to Being-*qua*-being they are of one and the same "stuff" and there is no difference (in them); with respect to (Being-*qua*-being's inner dynamic there is a difference (in them). [Taken individually,] they are neither good nor evil, taken collectively, they are both coarse and subtle. Emerging as *rig-pa* (excitability) it is (the individual's capability of) experiencing (*myong*), subtly quivering as *yid* (egocentricity) it is (the individual's organismic mentation that as "memory" (*dran*) [is instrumental in the individual's awareness of his personal identity], radiating as *sems* (mentation) it is (the individual's capability of) naming (things). By becoming enamored with naming (things) joyousness as well as sadness (concerning what has been named) is born (in the individual.)"

This excursion into the hermeneutics of the salient psychological terms, however lengthy it may seem, will help us in understanding both Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's comments on the "sentient beings in the three levels of their enworldedness" and the allegory's first stanza with its intimation that this complexity is one of the many mountain passes that have to be crossed. Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, apparently taking up Padma-

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289 Notably among the Mādhyamikas who, after all, were not visionaries, but logicians, logic being a discipline that is reductionist to a degree.

290 *rGyud thams-cad-kyi rtse-rgyal nam-mkha' 'bar-ba'i rgyud*, 1: 94a:

> *sems dang rig-pa yid dang gsum-la khyad-par yod dam med/ ces zhus-pas/ ston-pas 'khor-la bka'-btsal-pa/ 'khor-gyi 'dri-ba gsum-po de/ gzhi-la 'dri 'am rtsal-la 'dri/ gzhi-la 'dri-na de gsum ngo-bo gcig ste khyad-par med/ rtsal-la 'dri-na khyad-par yod/ bzang-ngan yod-pa ma-yin te/ tshogs-pa rags mi-rags-su yod/ rig-pa skyes-pas myong-ba yod/ yid-du 'gyus-pas dran-pa 'byung/ sems-su gsal-bas ming-du btags/ btags-la zhen-pas dga'-mi-dga'-ru skyes*

sambhava's distinction between the coarse (more or less perceptible) and the subtle (more or less imperceptible), explains the allegory's words as meaning that a stop has to be put on what is so described, by eradicating (one's) mentation (*sems*) and mentation-related operants (*sems-byung*)[291] in which the three so-called "gates" (*sgo*) that are the sentient being's body, speech, and mind (in common parlance), and the three levels of his en-worldedness, the levels/dimensionalities of his sensuality (*'dod-chags*), his sensuous perceptibilities (*gzugs*), and his neither-sensual-nor-sensuous awareness modality (*gzugs-med*), are gathered.[292]

As the allegory continues, a perpetual intertwining of "concrete" and "abstract" images within the ubiquitous experiencer's intrapsychic, imaginal (not to be confused with imaginary) dimensionality becomes perceptible. This dimensionality is, in cognitive-experiential terms, the *rig-pa*'s closing-in onto itself as *rang-rig* that despite its intensity is a barrier or hurdle, a "mountain pass," that has to be overcome or "crossed over." It is here that language, as commonly understood, reveals its shortcomings in that it entices us to conceive of the overcoming and/or crossing over as a "going into" something that inevitably will turn out to be another dead end. In order to avoid this pitfall the allegory's author is at pains to draw attention to what prevents us from becoming whole in a dynamic sense. In the spirit of the allegory's author, Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa explicates the "adamantine headmaster (*rdo-rje-slob-dpon*) having turned into an ocean (*rgya-mtsho*)" in the second aphorism as a visionary stance that in its *com*-prehensiveness is a veritable ocean. This visionary stance is, as he goes on to explain, an infusion of luminance into the visionary's eyes by virtue of

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[291] For details see Herbert V. Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity,* chapter two "The Operational System "Mind."

[292] These hierarchically organized levels or dimensionalities are referred to in Pali as *kāmāvacara, rūpāvacara,* and *arūpāvacara,* respectively. In Sanskrit they are referred to as *kāmadhātu, rūpadhātu,* and *arūpadhātu,* respectively. Their speculative character is underlined by the fact that another designation for the first component in the last-mentioned level/dimensionality is *āruppa* and *ārūpya*, respectively. This controversial term, a neologism in both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhist texts, seems to have been coined to counter the overall static connotation of the three levels/dimensionalities in an attempt to stress their non-static character. From the process-oriented rDzogs-chen perspective this would allow us to interpret this term, controversial even by Indian standards, as "the whole's No/no-thingness/nothingness/openness ("perfect symmetry") approaching (*ā-*) via its approximation perfect symmetry the *rūpa*-level/dimensionality as an exact symmetry break, where *rūpa* is understood as *rūpya*, a derivative of the verbal root *rup (ruppati, rūpyati*) "to break," "to collapse" (initiating further symmetry breaks)."

the divisive tendencies of the *yid* or *sems* being no longer operative, and hence a "knowing directly."[293] Though not stated explicitly, there is a subtle intimation of the pervasive principle of complementarity: "seeing with fresh eyes" relates primarily to the vastness of the sky as one's intellectual horizon, while the depth of the ocean relates to the range of one's feelings. Poetically this "fusional" complementarity has been expressed by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:[294]

> Wenn ihr's nicht fühlt, ihr werdet's nicht erjagen
>
> (If you don't feel it, you won't catch up with it).

The two following aphorisms (nos. 3 and 4) are closely related in stressing those relationships that affect us personally and, if accepted unquestioningly, are a hurdle that, whether we like it or not, we will have to jump. There is, first of all, on the social level, the overt brother-sister (*mched-lcam*) relationship that, on a less overt level, is the individual's vibrational dynamic (*rlung*) in interaction with his mentation (*sems*) conceived of as constituting a distinct dualism that prevents him from seeing and feeling the underlying unity, spoken of on this level as a coherent set of impulses (*lu-gu-rgyud*).[295] Continuing on the social level, as children the brother-sister pair have a "dad" and a "mom" (*pha-ma*)[296] who generate their physical body (*lus*) and its life-force (*srog*) and who, when sensuously-spiritually envisioned, are "lamps" in the sense of what we would call a "field" (*dbyings*) and its "*in*-formation/organization dynamic" (*thig-le*) that, in other words is the field's excitability/excitation (*rig*).[297] Thereby,

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[293] There exists an extensive literature concerning these visionary stances (*lta-stangs* on a "lower" level, *gzigs-stangs* on a "higher" level) differing according to the individual's intellectual-spiritual readiness.

[294] *Faust I*, "Night," line 534.

[295] On this term see above p. 119 n. 249.

[296] I have used these colloquial expressions as they reflect the Tibetan diction that is very clear about the physical (*pha-ma*) and the psychic-spiritual, archetypal (*yab-yum*).

[297] In his explicatory notes Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa refers to these two "lamps" as the *dbyings rnam-dag-gi sgron-ma* (short for *dbyings rnam-par-dag-pa'i sgron-ma*) and the *thig-le stong-pa'i sgron-ma*. A lengthy analysis of the meaning and function of these "lamps" on the basis of quotations from works found in the Atiyoga (rDzogs-chen) collection, is found in his *gSang-ba bla-na-med-pa 'od-gsal-rdo-rje-snying-po'i gnas-gsum gsal-bar-byed-pa'i tshig-don rin-po-che'i mdzod* (sDe-dge ed., volume *Ga*, fols. 58a-60b, and fols. 55b-58a, respectively). In the present context it must suffice to point out that the *dbyings rnam-par-dag-pa* refers to the wealth of patterns in their symbolic expressiveness and the *thig-le stong-pa* to the "voiding" of any concretization of what is symbolically expressive. There is thus still some dualism present.

each of us, male and/or female, is a "body" in its own right (*rang-lus*) and as such grows in what is its birthright, the whole's lighting-up as itself.

While the previous two aphorisms emphasized the social context in which the visionary experiencer finds himself, the three following ones (nos. 5, 6, and 7) emphasize his cultural milieu that, too, has to be jumped over or crossed. This cultural milieu that, in a certain sense is he himself and his environment, is, in the first instance, indicated by what the aphorism has called a "site of worship" (*mchod-rten*)[298] and a "shrine room" (*lha-khang*). Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa mythopoetically interprets the phrase *mchod-rten lha-khang* as meaning that the center of the *tsitta* is such that in a (shrine) room (*khang*) of five (proto-)lights (*'od-lnga*) there (stands) a site of worship that is the *rig-pa*. More prosaically we might say that the "site of worship" is the visionary experiencer's "body," in a narrower sense a shrine room, in which he as a divine spark (*lha*) has taken up residence.[299] It is here that the originary awareness mode (*ye-shes*) in its guise as an "external" lighting-up and the originary awareness mode that is the visionary experiencer's existential reality as his "internal" creativity meet inseparably through a visionary stance that is called and described as the *rgyang-zhags chu'i sgron-ma*. This term that actually is a compound of *rgyang-zhags* and *chu'i sgron-ma* seems to have been used in its short form of *rgyang-zhags* for the first time by Vimalamitra who relates this visionary stance to the *chos-sku*, the visionary's experience of himself as an undivided/indivisible meaning-saturated corporeity. A full explication of this compound is presented by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa in his *Tshig-don mdzod*[300] on the basis of the *Mu-tig phreng-ba rin-po-che'i rgyud*[301] and the

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298 The Tibetan term that I have translated quite literally, has several equivalents in Sanskrit such as *caitya* (most commonly used in Sanskrit works) and *stūpa* (most frequenty used in Western works). A good study with many illustrations is Lama Anagarika Govinda's *Psycho-cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stūpa*.

299 This calls to mind the words of the German poet Novalis (Friedrich Leopold, Baron (Freiherr) von Hardenberg, 1772-1801), *Fragmente* n. 1325:

> Es gibt nur einen Tempel in der Welt, und das ist der menschliche Körper. Nichts ist heiliger als diese hehre Gestalt.
>
> (There is only one Tempel in the world, and this is the human body. Nothing is more sacred than this sublime Gestalt).

300 For the full title see above note 297.

301 The title of this work is also given as *Mu-tig rin-po che phreng-ba'i rgyud* (sDe-dge ed., 4: 50a-79b). The following quotation is based on Ati, volume 2, column 499.

sGron-ma'bar-ba'i rgyud.[302] Here it may suffice to quote Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's short reference to it from the *Mu-tig phreng-ba*:[303]

> *rgyang* (distance) means that on the stallion of the five senses
> The egological mind as the rider sallies forth and
> Rushes into all the cognitive domains to gather what they have to offer;
> *zhags* (fetter) means that as the appropriating mentation it takes in the "look" of the domains that are to be appropriated.
> *chu* (water) means that (this lamp) separates the luminance-"stuff" from the opacity-"stuff" in them.
> Moreover, (this lamp) is present in the two eyes in equal proportions.
> In brief, it is the luminance of the senses (operating within the framework of the subject-object dichotomy).[304]

It is through the luminance of the senses that the link with the light that is one's wholeness as radiance (*'od-gsal*) is re-established, poetically expressed by the rDzogs-chen thinkers as the re-union of a mother with her child.

In the second instance of the visionary experiencer's embeddedness in a cultural context, a reference is made to the "three jewels" (*dkon-mchog gsum*)[305] that, though they are the rarest and best, must be pushed into the background if one expects ever to have a vision of one's unearthly-earthly spiritual humanness. As the Gnostics with whom Vimalamitra was well acquainted, would say, and as Klong-chen-ra-'byams-pa at a much later time

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[302] Its full title is *gSer-gyi me-tog mdzes-pa rin-po-che sgron-ma 'bar-ba'i rgyud* (sDe-dge ed., 4: 108-117b). This work is devoted to a detailed presentation of the "lamps." It is said to have been composed by Vimalamitra and translated/edited by sKa-ba-dpal-brtsegs, a contemporary of Padmasambhava. The "lamp" under consideration here forms its first chapter. See also Ati, volume 1, columns 288-292.

[303] Loc. cit., fol. 54a:

> *rgyang ni sgo-lnga'i rta-pho-la*
> *yid-kyi rnam-shes zhon-nas rgyu*
> *yul-rnams kun-la 'jug-cing sdud*
> *zhags-pas gzung-ba'i yul nyid ni*
> *'dzin-pa'i sems-kyis rnam-par bzung*
> *chus ni dangs snyigs 'byed-par byed*
> *de yang gnyis-na cha-mnyam ste*
> *mdor–na dbang-po'i dangs-ma yin*

[304] This translation incorporates the glosses by an unknown author. Without them an intelligible translation would hardly be possible.

[305] They are known in the Western world by their thingification into the Buddha (as a person), the Dharma (as his teaching), and the Sangha (as his followers).

elaborated by stating that, by pushing the vagaries of one's egological mentation (*yid*) (so mixed-up with the three poisons that ultimately are the root of samsara and its low-level excitability (*ma-rig-pa*)), into the background and, instead, by turning one's gaze to what turns out to become one's supraconscious ecstatic intensity (*rig-pa*), one will see, in the strict sense of the word, one's (the whole's) creativity (*chos-nyid mngon-sum*) and how its felt quality intensifies (*nyams-gong-'phel*) into the pattern of one's being a guiding image (*sprul-sku*). Reaching its climax (*tshad-phebs*) in one's being a social being by always being-with-others and enjoying it (*longs-sku*), in the end (*zad-pa*), if this is still the right word, it becomes one's meaning-saturated pattern (*chos-sku*), each and every phase being Being's (the whole's) lighting-up.

In the third instance of the visionary experiencer's status as a cultural being, his authenticity becomes the leitmotif. It is summed up in the lines two and three of the seventh aphorism and rephrased by Klong-chen-rab-byams-pa as *sangs-rgyas dur-du bcug-pas rtogs-pa* that may be more or less literally translated as "an understanding/*inner*standing (that has come about) by entombing the (darkness-)gone/(light-)having-spread experience." But even so it leaves much unresolved. What are we to make of the "having been set free" (*bsgral*) in the original version and passed over in silence by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa? The answer is given by this very term/phrase that means a divesting something of what is not pertinent to it-*qua*-itself. In the line under consideration, it intimates that the *sangs-rgyas* phenomenon has to be understood on its own terms rather than on its concretization as some *thing*. The same applies to the *dur* in the phrase *dur bcug* whose rendering by "entombed" is admittedly unsatisfactory, if not to say, misleading by its association with theistically influenced belief systems. In its mundane context the Tibetan term *dur*, particularly in its compound *dur-khrod*, like its Sanskrit equivalent *śmaśāna*, means a desolate, eerie location where corpses are left to be devoured by wild animals or, where wood is available, are cremated. But in the supramundane atmosphere of the allegory it means something quite different. Two passages may illustrate this point. The one goes back to Padmasambhava's contemporaries Śrīsiṁha and his translator/editor Vairocana and has this to say:[306]

[306] *bDe-ba-chen-po byang-chub-kyi sems rmad-du-byung-ba'i le'u*, 25: 226b:

byang-chub-sems-kyi don rtogs-pas
sangs-rgyas kun-gyi nying-sha-can

By [my] understanding the (existential) meaning of [what is] the thrust [in the direction of] limpid clearness and consummate perspicacity,

I, being of the nature of the flesh [as which my] being *erlichtet* (alight) in its wholeness [has become a presence],

Am the *dur* of [this] being *erlichtet* (alight) in its wholeness.

The dur-khrod par excellence is [my] ego/Self.

Each and every spiritually advanced person and

Each and every thinking person has originated from me.

The very *dur* (that is) a thinking person is me,

You who are so fortunate to be a spiritually advanced person, be alert to it.

The second passage is by Vimalamitra and concisely states:[307]

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nga ni sangs-rgyas kun-gyi dur
dur-khrod-chen-po nga-bdag yin
sems-dpa'-chen-po thams-cad dang
sems-can thams-cad nga-las byung
sems-can dur nyid nga yin te
skal-ldan sems-dpa' rig-par gyis

In this quotation attention should be paid to the contrast between *kun* used in connection with *sangs-rgyas*, and *thams-cad* used in connection with *sems-can.* The experience of being *erlichtet* (alight), for short, is "holistic," a "holon," hence *kun*, the experience of being of the nature of *sems*, here rendered as a "thinking person," is "itemizing" in the sense of being applicable to each and everyone. The Tibetan term *sems-can* differs from its Sanskrit equivalent *sattva*, usually mistranslated as "sentient being" whilst actually meaning an "existing entity," by emphasizing what is *sems* that in itself is a term of multiple connotations. As a rule, *sems* reflects the mentalistic character of Tibetan thinking. It leaves the question of what is meant by "thinking" open. As a rule, *sems* is used to refer to a person's ontic foundation that is pretty much of the nature of some low-level excitability/ excitation (*ma-rig-pa*). In this respect a *sems-can* differs from a *sems-dpa'* who is a person who dares (or has the courage) to think in the sense of becoming (spiritually) excited and alert.

Śrīsiṁha's text as a whole reveals his acquaintance with the Gnostic *Apocryphon of John* that, like other apocryphal texts were meant to remain secret and hidden, as did many, if not all, rNying-ma *gter-ma* (*gter-rgya*) writings.

The reference to the speaker's (teacher/revealer's) "flesh" (*nyin-sha*) calls to mind the statement in the *Gospel of John* I,14 "And the Word was made flesh," where "Word" may well have been a mistranslation of the original Greek *logos*. On the many meanings of the word *logos* see Giovanni Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*, s.v., Kurt Rudolph, *Gnosis*, s.v.

307 *Dur-khrod phung-po 'bar-ba'i rgyud*, 5: 46a:

dur ni chos-kyi dbyings yin te
khrod ni rig-pa'i ye-shes nyid
rang-gis rang-snang zin-pa'o

dur means the dimensionality of meanings (stored or in *statu nascendi)*,
khrod means the very originary awareness modes as functions of the supraconscious ecstatic intensity,
By itself it holds to its auto-lighting-up.

Turning to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's explication of this aphorism, we find that he has condensed lines two and three into a single terse sentence: *sangs-rgyas dur-du bcug-pas rtogs-pa* which, strange to say, is the title of the second chapter of a work that, though its author and translator/editor are unknown, clearly originated within the circles around Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra.[308]

Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's interpretation does not seem to have much to do with the wording of this aphorism and, to a certain extent is as cryptic as the aphorism itself. His main concern is its implied notion of the *rang-rig* and the principle of complementarity, expressed by the contrasting notions of *rig-pa* and *ma-rig-pa* that somehow are emergent phenomena from a deeper layer of the psyche (for want of a better word). His words are that at that point-instant or phase-space when one comes face-to-face

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[308] This work is the *Ye-shes thig-le zang-thal-gyi rgyud* (Tapei ed., vol. 55, pp. 417 column 7 to p. 421 column 4). The relevant passage on p. 418 column 2 reads as follows:

phyi-nang-med-pa'i dur-khrod-du
kun-tu-bzang-po dur-du zhugs
dur-khrod ming ni yangs-pa-can
khrod-kyi ming ni padma-can
shing-gi ming ni ljon-pa ste
mkha'-'gro ming ni rdo-rje-mtsho
mchod-rten ming ni rdo-rje-rtsegs
ri-yi ming ni sa-ri'i ro
sgom-chen ming ni nor-bu'i 'od
nor-gyi ming ni rin-po-che
phyi-nang-med-pa'i dur-khrod yin

In the *dur-khrod* that has neither an exterior nor an interior,
Kun-tu-bzang-po has settled in [what is His*] dur;*
The name of this *dur* is *yangs-pa-can (Vaiśālī),*
The name of this *khrod* is *padma-can (padmavatī),*
The name of the tree is *ljon* (The Tree),
The name of the *mkha'-'gro/mkha'-'gro-mas* is *rdo-rje-mtsho* (Diamond Lake),
The name of the *mchod-rten is rdo-rje-rtsegs* ([Three-tiered] Diamond Building),
The name of the mountain is *sa-ri'i ro* (The corpse of one's material body),
The name of the pensive (Self) is *nor-bu'I 'od* (The Light of the Jewel),
The name of the *nor* is *rin-po-che* (Precious).
(Such is) the *dur-khrod* that has neither an exterior nor interior.

with and recognizes one's *ma-rig-pa* as co-emergent with one's *rig-pa*, the *rang-rig* is (its) understanding/*inner*standing. This last part of his explication, the *rang-rig rtogs-pa*, is the crux of his presentation. We have already noted that *rang-rig* is a cognitively felt experience that does not depend on anything other than itself and, if one tries to fit it into one's prevailing externalizing thinking mode, leads one into a maze of self-contradictory statements. What we have to understand by it may best be expressed poetically, as was done by Padmasambhava:[309]

> Like a lotus flower that, though it grows in a swamp, is not soiled by its mud,
> The *rang-rig* emerging as the mistaken notions of a without and a within,
> Has never slipped (from what it) has been and is:
> It is the (darkness-)gone/(light-)having-spread experience that does not go astray.

From the perspective of the ubiquitous experiencer, intimated by the *rang* "own," "self-(reflexive)" in the compound *rang-rig*, also spoken of as *rang-gi rig-pa*, the expression *rang-rig* allows itself to be rendered as the experiencer's "eigenexcitability/excitation" (not a very nice term, but an exact one). Since the experiencer is himself an emergent phenomenon or a phase-space in Being's (the whole's) closing-in onto itself, it is at this point-instant that the principle of complementarity in the sense of a symmetry break becomes operative. It will be remembered that for descriptive purposes rDzogs-chen thinkers distinguished between a *gzhi*, Being-*qua*-being as the ground and reason for there being beings, and a *gzhi-snang*, Being's holomovement as its lighting-up, whilst fully aware of the fact that the *gzhi* is nowhere else than in its *snang*, the one, as it were, "at rest," the other, as it were, "ever active" and described as the former's "inner dynamic." In view of the whole's *Lichthaftigkeit*, referred to as*'od mi-'gyur-ba* "Light-invariant," and its inner dynamic (*rtsal*) in its lighting-up as "rays of light" (*rtsal-zer, 'od-zer, zer*), it so happens that the *Lichthaftigkeit* that is nowhere else than in its dynamic, as a centrality surrounds itself with concentric fields one of which is luminescent, and the other intelligent, in the

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[309] *sPros-bral don-gsal,* 1: 45b:

> *padma 'dam-na gnas kyang skyon-gyis ma-gos ltar*
> *phyi-nang 'khrul-par shar kyang ni*
> *rang-rig ye-nas gol-ba med*
> *ma-'khrul-pa-yi sangs-rgyas yin*

same sense as we speak of brilliance and intelligence. In rDzogs-chen technical terms the one is called *rtsal-zer* "the inner dynamic's rays of light," and the other is called *shes-rig* "the excitation of the *shes*" (left untranslated for the moment). Padmasambhava explicates these two fields or circles of audiences (*'khor*) of the teacher/revealer in the following words:[310]

> The entourage formed by the *rtsal-zer* and the *shes-rig* is as follows:
> Unceasing, the *rtsal-zer* is the entourage formed by luminosity and (its) agitatedness;
> The *shes-rig* is the entourage formed by egological mentation, (its) background, the organismic mentation's fragmentizations, and one's intellect.

In the same manner as the "rays of light" (*zer*), cosmically speaking, emerge from the whole's inner dynamic (*rtsal*), so the "excitation" (*rig*), anthropically speaking, emerges from the whole's intelligence (*shes*) that by its symmetry-breaking dynamic ushers in, if I may say so, the complementarity of *rig-pa* and *ma-rig-pa*, graphically expressed as follows

shes-pa

rig-pa ma-rig-pa

Inasmuch as that which is referred to as *shes-pa*, because of its dynamic character, carries with it an element of excitability/excitation that "objectifyingly" is called *rang-rig* (the system's "eigenexcitation") and "subjectifyingly" experienced is called *rang-gi rig-pa* (one's "eigenexcitation"), it becomes possible to focus on and be this excitability/ excitation (*rig-pa*) in the sense of "crossing the mountain pass" without ending up in the same impasse in which one has been before. Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa attempts to illustrate this crossing over of one's habitual dualism, roughly referred to as the contrast between the instinctive-affective-pollutant and the transparent-symbolic, by saying that, when the (ambivalent) *shes-pa* has emerged as the instinctive-affective-pollutant, it is by taking a hard look at this patent instinctive-affective-pollutant that had been dormant in (the *shes-pa*'s) *ma-rig-pa* ("not-quite-excited") aspect, and by eliciting (its compresent) *rig-pa* (aspect) in all its nakedness, (one will notice) that the *ma-rig-pa* aspect with

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310 *gTer-snying rin-po-che spungs-pa'i rgyud*, 3: 316a:

> *rtsal-zer shes-rig-gyi 'khor yang 'di-lta ste*
> *ma-'gags rtsal-zer'od dang 'gyu-ba'i 'khor dang*
> *shes-rig yid sems dran-rtog blo'i 'khor dang*

its instinctive-affective-pollutant (facets) dissipates in the *rig-pa*, which means that the *rig-pa* continues being there as a sheer nothingness-openness.[311] Lest this insistence on "nothing" may tempt us to read into it our own nihilism, Padmasambhava's assessment of the *rang-gi rig-pa/rig-pa* may be quoted:[312]

> The *rang-gi rig-pa* is the *chos-sku*, [standing] apart and aloof of thematic limitations;
>
> It is threefold:
>
> Internal, (as) excitability it is the *chos-sku*,
>
> External, (as) lighting-up it is the dimensionality of meanings (in *statu nascendi*),
>
> In-between, (as) the *rig-pa*'s inner dynamic it is ceaselessness.
>
> (The description of the *rang-gi rig-pa* in terms of) "internal, (as) excitability it is the *chos-sku*" means that
>
> The *rig-pa*'s radiating (*gsal*) and voiding (*stong*) do not constitute a duality.
>
> Rather, since the *rang-gi rig-pa* is not something contrived [and/or improvable], it is not found as some stuff or other, and this is [its, that is, the whole's] creativity's voiding aspect (*stong-cha*);
>
> Its not being found as anything whatsoever, is the *rig-pa*'s luminescence, and that is the *rang-rig*'s radiating aspect (*gsal-cha*).
>
> Since the radiating and the voiding are not different from each other, this is the non-duality of (the *rig-pa/rang-rig*'s) radiating and voiding.
>
> Therefore, also, this non-duality's [feeling tone] is (its) happiness-blissfulness aspect (*bde-cha*).

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311 The Tibetan *zang-nge thal-le* is an onomatopoietic elaboration of the simple *zang-thal* that describes an experience in which one comes up to a wall and goes straight through it.

312 *sPros-bral don-gsal*, 1: 44a:

> *rang-gi rig-pa chos-kyi sku spros-pa dang bral-ba yin te/*
> *de-la dbye-na gsum*
> *nang rig-pa chos-kyi sku dang*
> *phyi snang-ba chos-kyi dbyings dang*
> *bar-du rig-pa'i rtsal mi-'gag-pa gsum*
> *nang rig-pa chos-kyi sku ni*
> *rig-pa gsal-stong gnyis-su med-pa yin te*
> *de-yang rang-gi rig-pa ma-bcos-pas sal-le-ba de nyid ci'i ngo-bor ma-grub-pa de chos-nyid-kyi stong-cha yin-no*
> *ma-grub-pa de-ka rang-rig-pa sal-le 'dug-pas/ rang-rig-gi gsal-cha'o*
> *stong-pa dang gsal-ba tha-dad-du ma-gyur-bas gsal-stong gnyis-su med-pa'o*
> *de'i phyir-na gnyis-med-kyi bde-cha'o*

As will have been noted so far, throughout this allegory, its thrust has been the visionary experiencer's subtle tuning in to the multifaceted dynamic of his transcending himself in which intensity (*rig*) is the measure of its effectiveness, and openness (*stong*) the measure of its intellectual-spiritual horizon, and illumination (*gsal*) the measure of its meaning in the sense of purpose and value. As measures they are not absolute, but arise out of the tacit infrastructure or, more precisely, infrastructur*ing*, of which the visionary experiencer is both participant and outcome. This infrastructure is referred to by the so-called "elemental forces," named after their rigidification as earth (solidity), water (fluidity), fire (temperature), air (motility), and sky/space/*spatium*, the latter linking them with Being's closing-in onto itself as its wholeness-*qua*-individuum. As Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa elaborates, this rigidification leads to their being mistakenly conceived of as entities within the subject (apprehending)-object (apprehendable) structure of one's thematizing-representational thinking mode, thereby losing their character of being symbolically expressive phenomena. Hence, by consuming their mistaken accretions with the fire of one's discriminative-appreciative acumen, washing away their ashes with one's natural contemplative mentality,[313] and then dispatching all of it into one's formative/*in-*

[313] This descriptive phrase, in Tibetan *rang-babs bsam-gtan*, is specific to Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's vocabulary. The term *bsam-gtan*, usually rendered as "meditation" in Western works, means a fixed stationary point (*gtan*) for representational thinking (*bsam*) and, at its best, marks a focussing on some concrete or abstract object (*rtse-gcig*) and, as such is of value for the proverbial scatterbrained person. It differs from *sgom* (*bsgoms*), also rendered as "meditation," although it has much in common with what the late Carl Gustav Jung has called "active imagination." The whole tenth canto of his *Chos-dbyings mdzod* (sDe-dge ed., vol. *Kha*, fols. 11b-14b) and his auto-commentary on it (ibid., fols. 76b-100b) are devoted to a clarification of the *rang-babs bsam-gtan* and the *sangs-rgyas-kyi dgongs-pa* "the intentionality of the (darkness-)gone/(light-)having spread experience as a *Sinnsetzung* (meaning-bestowing activity)." In the present context, the second stanza and the commentary of it are of particular interest. The stanza, on fol. 11b, reads

> *yul kyang mi-dgag sems kyang mi-gzung-bar*
> *rang-bzhin lhun-mnyam ngang-las mi-g.yo-bar*
> *kun-bzang yangs-pa chen-po'i dgongs-par phyin*

> By neither denying the "object" nor affirming the "subject" (and)
> By not moving from the scope of (one's) ownmost ability-to-be that is there of its own accord and remains identical with itself,
> One has arrived at the ultimately positive and vast intentionality [that gives meaning to one's life].

The commentary on it, on fol. 79a, reads

formative existential source that has nothing to do with a so-called "ultimate" ground, the meaning and existential reality of the *rig-pa* is understood.

In the following aphorisms (nos. 9 to 12), the allegory moves from the (seemingly) inanimate, the "entities" (*chos*) into which the elemental forces (*'byung-ba*) have transformed themselves and become congealed or frozen patterns, to the (equally seemingly) animate, the "sentient beings" (*sems-can*) who, too, are solidifications of an intrinsically whole and, as such, indefinable intelligence (*shes/shes-rab*). It is in this context that Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa introduces the term *dran-pa* that, though not incorrectly translated as "memory," involves more than what is ordinarily understood by it (last night's dinner, for instance). What is involved (and, by the way, understood by the rDzogs-chen thinkers) is, in modern diction, succinctly stated by David Michael Levin:[314]

> (i) going down 'into' oneself, into the 'innermost,' most individual depths of oneself (*Er-innerung*) and (ii) reclaiming, or bringing forth, the potential to be developed (*Wiederholung*). The passage through these phases is crucial, inasmuch as the authentic recollection is *not* a 'repetition'in the sense that it attempts to replicate the experience of

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> *rig-pa gsal-stong zang-thal-du rjen-la bud-pa'i ngo-bo-las ma-g.yos-par/ phyi snang-ba'i yul tshur mi-len/ nang rtog-pa'i sems phar mi spro/ bar gnyis-med-kyi bsgoms-pas rig-pa ma-bcings-par/ zang-nge thal-le rang-babs-su gnas-pa ste/ gzhag-thabs bzhi dang/ ting-nge-'dzin gsum-gyis rig-pa srang-du'dzud-pa'o*

> Without moving away from (one's) "stuff" in which the *rig-pa* has been brought out into its nakedness as radiating-voiding-dissipating, one will neither internalize (subjectify) what externally lights-up as the phenomenal, nor externalize (objectify) what internally is (one's) thematizing-fragmentizing mentation, nor shackle the *rig-pa* by what is in-between (these two extremes) by a non-duality imagination; rather one lets (the *rig-pa)* be in its self-settledness *(rang-babs).* This is the *rig-pa*'s (self-) balancing-out by four devices of a letting-be *(gzhag-thabs)* and three in-depth-appraisals *(ting-nge-'dzin).*

The four devices of a letting-be (*Gelassenheit*) present a double complementarity: externally "envisioned" they are imaged as a huge mountain (*ri-bo cog-gzhag*) and a deep lake (*rgya-mtsho cog-gzhag*); internally "felt" they are the dynamic of the *rig-pa* (*rig-pa cog-gzhag*) and the dynamic of the lighting-up (*snang-ba cog-gzhag*). The three in-depth appraisals (literally, one's listening to and being held by and being beholden to Being's calling) are an ultimate abidingness of Being as one's own (*rang-gnas chen-po ting-nge-'dzin*), a settledness in Being's primordiality (*thog-babs chen-po ting-nge-'dzin*), and an ultimate being marked by Being (*rgyas-'debs chen-po ting-nge-'dzin*), anticipating, as it were, Martin Heidegger's dictum that all beings are marked by Being.

[314] *The Body's Recollection of Being*, p. 77.

> the past with a slavish submission to its historical precedence, but is rather a 'repetition' in the sense that, in its own appropriate way, and in keen awareness of its own time, it prepares us to undergo an *original* experience of Being – an experience whose disclosiveness is somehow emancipatory.

As a dynamic principle this *dran-pa*, pertaining to the mundane, anthropic level, like the *shes-pa*, pertaining to the supramundane cosmic level,[315] ushers in, without losing its connectedness with the latter, its own complementarity and symmetry breakings. Graphically this can be presented as follows

dran-pa



dran-rig *dran-bsam* ☾ *dran-rtog/dran-'dzin*

In view of the rDzogs-chen thinkers' holistic approach to what concerns a human individual in his multifaceted and complex, if not to say, complicated and self-complicating reality with its pervasive principle of complementarity in the lead, it is possible to conceive of the *shes-pa* of the supramundane level and the *dran-pa* on the mundane level as forming a complementarity of *in*-tensity, on the one hand, and *ex*-tensity, on the other hand, with the added connotation of each pole presenting a tension field that excludes any stagnation (*stasis*). Furthermore, while it is possible to conceive of the supramundane level of the *shes-pa* with its *rig-pa* ↔ *ma-rig-pa* complementarity as an *in*-tensity fluctuation lowering itself into the mundane level of the *dran-pa* with its *dran-rig* ↔ *dran-bsam*, it is possible to conceive of the latter as presenting a proliferation of a self-fragmentizing *ex*-tensity, as intimated by the three terms *dran-bsam*, *dran-rtog*, and *dran-'dzin*.[316] Here, *bsam* refers to one's everyday lacklustre, shilly-shallying reasoning, *rtog* to its, that is, one's dichotomizing and progressively conceptualizing-fragmentizing tendency, and '*dzin* to its, that is, one's egocentricity or unauthentic Self engrossed in the figments of its own making about anything and everything. As a unitary process these three phases were somehow felt as a downhill race likely to terminate in utter stagnation. That it did not come so far was due to the *rig-pa*'s compresence with this overall *ma-rig-pa* trend, even if it was itself of a diminished intensity

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[315] See above p. 153.

[316] Significantly, though not surprisingly, none of these compounds is listed in any of the available dictionaries.

due to its *dran*, rather than pure *shes*, character. Because of our ingrained matter-dominated dualistic mode of thinking that encounters enormous difficulties when it comes to dealing with what does not allow itself to be reduced to or fit into its frame, we may, however, for argument's sake, speak of the *shes* as the mental/spiritual (*das Geistige*) and the *dran* as the physical/organismic (*das Materielle*). It so happens that through the *rig-pa*'s compresence with our low-level intensity as sentient beings, we somehow feel impelled to do something about this debilitating state. When we start doing so, we describe our actions in terms that pertain to our enworldedness. Two descriptors stand out conspicuously in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's comments on what is involved in one's "crossing the mountain pass." The one is called a "setting free" (*bsgral*) in the sense of divesting what is under consideration of whatever conceals its real nature and is the source of one's going astray into mistaken identifications that prevent us from seeing *alētheically* and, in its awareness, enabling us to act with a suprasensual concern for all that is. On its mundane level it is imbued with one's discriminative-appreciative critical acumen (nr. 9) and, on its supramundane level it is our experiencing our "no-birth" and, by implication, our "no-death," the *rig-pa* that we are in its nakedness (nr. 16). This is so because of our and the *rig-pa*'s no-thing-ness; only "things," figments of our low-level excitability, can be claimed to be born and to die. The other one is called a "cutting off" (*bcad/gcad*). In particular, *bsgral* is used with reference to the sentient beings (nrs. 1, 2. and 9) in their overt presence, while *bcad/gcad* is used with reference to "what makes them tick." This, on the one hand, is what is called one's life-force (nr. 10) and, on the other hand, is what is called the flow of the low-level excitability's opinions and their stranglehold (nr. 13). Certainly, *bcad/gcad* are strong terms which the literalist, because of his limited vision and his shying away from experiencing what he is talking about, is bound to misunderstand. What they intend to convey is, first of all, *calming down* the turbulence that marks the life-force in its rushing ahead by following the straight path of desire and expressing itself in the individual's panting that makes any *alētheic* seeing impossible. Secondly, they intend to convey the necessity to *break* the constant self-defeating egological preoccupation with itself and to *develop* a visionary experience *beyond* the egological stage. Thus, this *bcad/gcad* has nothing to do with suppression, repression, sublimation, and whatever other devices the paltry ego my invent to safeguard his paltriness and insignificance. Rather, it is a letting go, an *ek-static* experience of our being-

human in its ontological dimension within a preternatural luminosity and radiance with respect to which everything else pales and disappears, leaving behind, however paradoxically it may sound, a wholesome feeling and awareness.

Depending on how one prefers to count, the eighth or forth allegory in Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa's listing has been titled "(Being's) radiance gathering in a vortex – symbolically presented" (*'od-gsal klong-du dril-ba'i brda*). Its literary source is the *sGra thal-'gyur-ba* that has this to say:[317]

> Now the interconnectedness of symbol, meaning, and word will be explained:
> While in the swirling centre of the conflagration (that marks the end) of the (present) age,
> A solitary Man, though not uttering a word,
> By way of mouth explains the meaning of the Tripitaka[318] and
> By way of deeds cuts off the life-force of (whatever) is an "other" [and hence not Himself]
> His meritoriousness increases — how wonderful!
> In an iron room with no doors,
> In the swirling centre of a darkness with no lighting,
> Nobody ever sees the sun's and the moon's brilliance, though (it is there),
> And yet it shines in the individual senses' fields (of vision).
> This not seeing (any thing is the real seeing) — how wonderful!

In his paraphrastic comment on the first stanza, Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa plays on the ambivalence of the word *tshig*, meaning "word" and

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[317] sDe-dge ed., 3: 374b; Ati, volume1, column 188:

gzhan yang brda-don-tshig-'brel bshad
bskal-pa'i me-dpung klong-dkyil-na
mi gcig tshig-pa-med-par yang
kha-nas sde-snod chos bshad cing
las-su gzhan-gyi srog gcod-pa
dge-sbyor 'phel-ba ya-re-cha

lcags-kyi khang-pa sgo-med-na
snang-med mun-pa'i klong-dkyil-na
nyi-ma zla-ba 'od-gsal yang
sus kyang mthong-ba med-pa ni
so-so'i dbang-po'i yul gsal-ba
mthong-ba med-pa ya-re-cha

[318] This is the collective name for the Buddhist Canon, consisting of the Vinaya (disciplinary codex), the Sutras (discourses), and the Abhidharma (psycho-philosophical probings).

"to consume by fire," and condenses the whole stanza into a single statement, the gist of which is that wholesomeness increases without itself being consumed in this conflagration.[319] Then he elaborates by saying that within the fire that is the welter of fragmentizing notions and their instinctive-affective re-enforcements there has been present a self-originated Man (or Anthropos, as we and before us the Gnostics would say) since time without beginning. Not wearing any clothes,[320] not being corruptible, not uttering a word, in knowing Himself who He is, He explained the Tripitaka. Since in this re-cognition of Himself the welter of His fragmentizing notion dissolve by themselves in Him, the life-force of what is not Himself is *eo ipso* cut off because it is but an egological subject-object construct without anything substantial to it. In short, it is by having hit on what is life's, *rig-pa*'s, "essence," that we can connect (*sbyor*) with what is wholesome — positive (*dge*).

The second stanza is interpreted by Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa in the light of the complementarity principle. In the darkness of one's physical body there is experienced its counterpart, the *tsitta*, that is, as we might say, semi-material and semi-mental/spiritual and as such sums up the compresence of what has been referred to as *rig-pa*, on the one hand, and *ma-rig-pa*, on the other hand, and thus may be said to constitute a tension field that keeps its experiencer, us in our embodiment, alive. On a more "concrete" level, this tension field is in its luminosity felt and visualized as the luminaries that go by the name of sun and moon. But we do not see them, because we tend to "see" thingishly, and they are not things. Rather, if we want to continue using the metaphor of sight, they are seeing's seeing in all its luminescence and, if I may say so, in its creativity. What Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa struggles to convey, has been stated admirably in Western terms by David Michael Levin:[321]

> We are beings of light, not only because we belong to the light and are, as visionary beings, essentially dependent on it, but also because our 'substance' is light – luminous energy. Being ourselves made of light, we are capable of making visible. We are made capable of seeing by grace of the lighting which surrounds us. But it is we who make

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[319] Tib. *me-dpung-gis mi-tshig-par dge-ba 'phel-ba.*

[320] Compare the "nakedness" in the aphorism nr. 16 in the preceding analogy. In view of the following *ma-bslad*, this *ma-gos* is synonymous with the more frequently used *ma-bcos* "unimprovable."

[321] *The Opening of Vision,* p. 469.

Being visible; without us, the dimensionality of beings would not be visible. Being thus beholden, we are being held responsible for developing our capacity to let the Being of beings be visible in the presencing of light and to make our relationship to this presencing luminously visible. We also *need* to understand Being as such in terms of our experience with vision, i.e., in terms of the clearing for the light to see by. This calls for our self-development: a new body of understanding, a body which understands itself as a body of light.

Concluding Remarks

While, from an historical perspective, similes (*dpe*, Skt. *upamā*) and metaphors (*gzugs-can*, Skt. *rūpaka*) abound in Indian (foremost Brahmanical) and Buddhist literature since earliest times, the use of allegories (*brda*, *brda'*, with no Sanskrit equivalent), expressing situations, events, and abstract ideas in terms of material objects, persons, and actions or interactions, gained prominence with Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, Śrīsiṁha, and their circles of disciples some of whom, as in the case of Padmasambhava and Śrīsiṁha, acted as translators and editors. This rise in the use of allegories as a didactive means coincided with a shift from an epistemology-oriented approach to an ontology-oriented approach to the problem of Man/human, the one more or less static and analytical, the other distinctly dynamic and holistic as implied by its designation of *rdzogs-chen*, meaning "complete, whole (*rdzogs*) in an ultimate (*chen*) sense.[322]

In this shift from an outward-directed "seeing" that leaves out the more or less detached observer who, after all, does the seeing, to an inward-directed "seeing" that recognizes the ineluctable presence of him who does the seeing, the visionary experiencer becomes the center of the unfolding drama called Life. Rather than being a paltry and negligible entity somewhere "out there" or an equally puny and dubious entity somewhere "in

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[322] There is a marked difference between what is called *rdzogs-rim* (Skt. *saṁpannakrama*) as the completion phase of the *bskyed-rim* (Skt. *utpattikrama*) initiating phase in seeing the world in a different light and *rdzogs-chen*. Both these phases or "stages" (*rim/krama*) are basically intellectual exercises, lacking in experiential qualities or, stating it differently, mistaking an image or a feature of an image for a thing. Even so, these phases/stages belong to the Indian Yogācāra thought system. However, what the Indians understood by *yoga* and the Tibetans by its so-called equivalent of *rnal-'byor* are miles apart.

here," he is a Self. By this term I understand the experiencer to be *a*, if not to say, *the* whole that, because of not being an entity or a thing, but more of the nature of a creative process,[323] may playfully narrow itself down and, when this "down" has reached a critical stage, may, by way of necessity, rise "up" to the whole that he dimly feels to have been. In mathematical terms, the wholeness that he presents, is, apart from its/his being an approximation symmetry transformation, a dilation symmetry transformation that works both ways, shrinking and expanding; in the language of a once widespread hermeticism, this Self's wholeness reflects his/its awareness of the "as above so below;" and in the language of modern hermeneutical phenomenology he is the incipient closure of Being-in-its-beingness onto itself as the visionary experiencer's own most unique ability-to-be.

In the attempt to describe this Self's process character that, strictly speaking, must be "lived through" in order to be understood before speaking of or about it, symbolic language (*brda, brda'*) becomes the vehicle of communication. Whether we conceive of this Tibetan concept by intuition as intimating an "epiphany of a mystery" (Gilbert Durand) or "the best possible representation of something that can never be fully known (Carl Gustav Jung) or "symbolic expressiveness" (Ernst Cassirer), it carries with it a distinctly visual and audible quality, because it is the "language" of the *ḍākinī*s, inspirational forces that "light up" before and "speak" to their visionary and listening experiencer in moments of ek-static experience (*Erleben*). In these moments he feels himself to "stand outside and above" his self-imposed closure and stricture of the primordial openness of Being-in-its-beingness. Lest this phrase "to stand outside" may mislead the reader, habituated to a static and reductionist world-view, into assuming that it refers to some altered state of consciousness or some other static notion, it should be emphasized that, in rDzogs-chen thinking, this "standing outside" is a "crossing over." Even if it is said that its feeling tone is bliss supreme (*bde-ba chen-po*), it is never understood as or reduced to a judgement of feeling, which would destroy its qualitative character. Qualities are not accidentals, as Aristotle would make us believe, they are

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[323] In this sense it has much in common with Carl Gustav Jung's conception of the Self as "the archetype of a supraordinate, organizing principle of psychic selfhood" (Robert H. Hopcke, *A Guided Tour of the Collected Works of. C.G.Jung*, p. 95). While it is true that we live in a world of images, the term archetype is an unfortunate rendering of the German word *Urbild* "primordial image," since it suggests some agent who does the "typing/imprinting."

the “stuff” the universe including ourselves is made of. Poets and artists know better despite the fact that Plato and his ilk hated the poets and denounced them as liars.

Allegories as a literary and didactive device to illustrate a living individual’s predicament of “going astray” by slipping from one extreme into another, and “reversing” this trend by extricating himself out of the mess into which he has landed himself, were amply made use of by Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra and, incidentally, by Śrīsiṁha. Specifically, Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra were well acquainted with Gnostic thinking that already before their time had spread along the Silk Road and left its mark on the ill-defined locale that goes by the name of Urgyan (Oḍḍiyāna), extending from the Middle Near East into Central Asia. It was here that Nestorianism, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism as well as other intellectual-spiritual movements existed side by side and, in all likelihood, influenced as well as borrowed from each other. Most noteworthy was the emphasis on light that in the emerging rDzogs-chen teaching was given a dynamic interpretation in the sense of it being an emergent phenomenon (a *phainesthai* rather than a *fait accompli*: a *phainomenon*).[324] However, the allegory’s golden age was soon gone. In between the time of Padmasambhava (a foreigner) and his contemporary Vimalamitra (an Indian and, since everything had to be “Indian” whatever that may mean, fully acceptable) and Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa, hardly any allegories can be found in the vast corpus of Tibetan textual material. It was Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa who resuscitated the use of allegory from total oblivion and his use of it in connection with the experience of Being’s (the whole’s) *Lichthaftigkeit* (*'od-gsal*) reveals him as a truly visionary experiencer.

The problem of the “down and up again” that each living person has to face and solve by himself without falling down again, is as pressing today as it was when it was first presented centuries ago in allegories that quite literally open one’s eyes and make us “see” and, as Martin Heidegger would say, live poetically. It should therefore not come as a surprise that a poet

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[324] Thus, the Tibetan technical term '*od-gsal* was understood as being a compound of *'od* and *gsal*, in which the first element was conceived of as initiating, in modern diction, a virtual light coming to presence (*snang*), and the second element as an actual light (*gsal*) illuminating whatever happens to come into its orbit.

like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe sums up this problem and theme by saying:[325]

Und so lang' du das nicht hast,
Dieses: Stirb und werde!
Bist du nur ein trüber Gast
Auf der dunklen Erde.

(And as long you do not have it,
This: Die and become!
You are but a wretched lodger
In this gloomy world).

[325] *West-östlicher Divan,* Selige Sehnsucht, last but one stanza.

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